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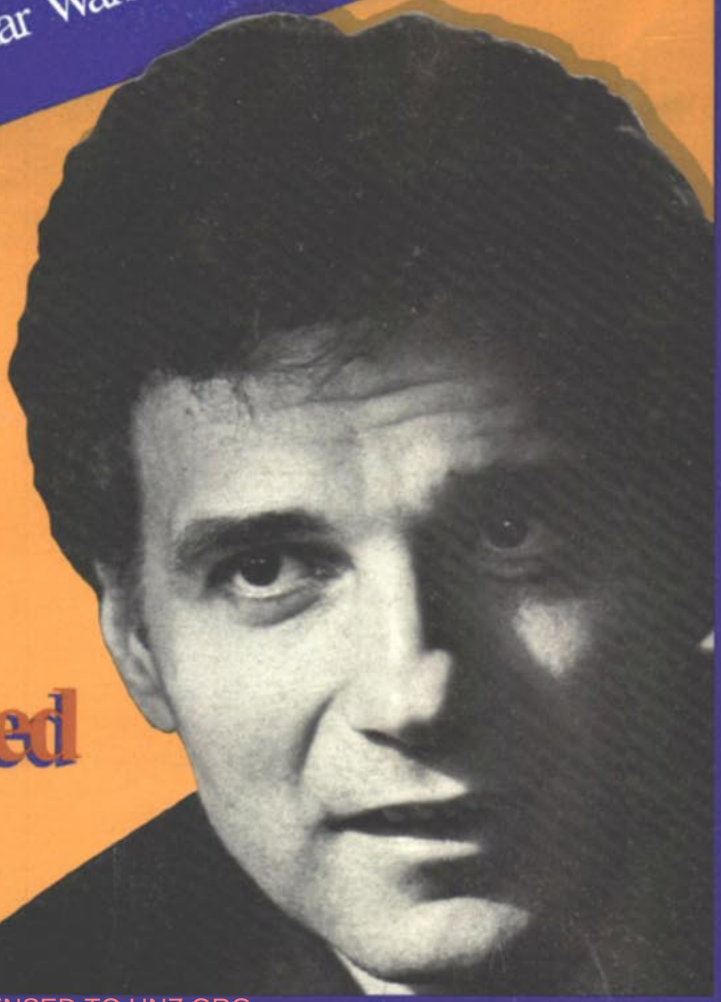

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LETTERS

Both sides now

As a broadcast journalist who twice took time off to serve in municipal government as an assistant to the city manager and a brief stint as a press aide for a gubernatorial candidate, I second your view of the value of having the journalist experienced in the field he/she writes about ["Tilting at Windmills," January]. In fact I've been preaching that issue for 15 years at broadcast news meetings.

I learned so much of what it's like to be on the other side of the fence that I can now wander comfortably back and forth preaching openness to local government officials at the same time as I advocate reportorial carefulness among newspeople.

Journalism is far too important to the maintenance of a free society to be left to the journalist.

GEORGE LIPPER
Macomb, Illinois

What's a 'nice racist'?

To my children, who have trouble understanding why their father has just about no white heroes, I shall refer to the Richard Reeves book review, "Why I Like Ike" in your January issue. And with that reference I will call my kids' attention to one of the reasons why their father appears such a cynical Black man. I will point out to them how, in spite of the fact the historian who wrote the book that Reeves reviewed, and Reeves himself, deemed Mr. Eisenhower to be a racist, still both of them treated that judgment as though 'boys will be boys,' after all.

Historian Ambrose even is quoted by Reeves as finding Eisenhower "fair" and "objective." Reeves speaks of Eisenhower as "...a nice racist." I will have to discuss with my children what constitutes fair and objective racism; and, what distinguishes a nice racist. Then we will have to chew over how the seriousness of racism is glossed over and the life of racism perpetuated by just such devil-may-care attitudes as exhibited by Ambrose and Reeves.

This society is rife with individuals who bandy around the word "racism" with mock sobriety, but who in reality have only the slightest respect for the havoc that racism wreaks in the lives of those against whom it is practiced.

WILLIAM SIMPSON
Park Forest, Illinois

Saving Grace

Your "Tilting at Windmills" [January] reported that the Grace Commission has called attention to the growing impact on the deficit of federal retirement programs for civilian and military employees. However, you forgot to advise your readers that Mr. J. Peter Grace draws an annual pension of $375,500 and *he isn't even retired.*

Actually, I think the deficit could be considerably reduced if companies such as W.R. Grace paid their fair share of taxes and the government stopped its corporate subsidies. Please note that W.R. Grace & Co. paid *no* taxes on $684 million in profits for a three-year period while Grace shipping lines has received $337,150,000 in government subsidies since 1936.

NORMAN L. DODGE
Springfield, Virginia

The press on unions

I enjoy being the subject of ad hominem attacks as much as the next person. I normally would not complain about the item mentioning me in "Tilting at Windmills," January 1985. However, the item was based on several inaccurate assumptions concerning some broader issues. The first is that organized labor in general and Lane Kirkland in particular are protected by friendly coverage, particularly in Washington. Ironically, *The Charleston Gazette* editorial critical of labor's political role and *The Washington Monthly* item in which it was reprinted were just two more of the predictable post-election attacks on the labor movement. (See *The Washington Post*, November 11; *Business Week*, November 19; *Newsweek*, November/December election issue.) Indeed, the anti-labor attack in *The Washington Monthly* (while simultaneously decrying the absence of anti-labor coverage) represented an unwitting and striking self-caricature. Equally important, however, is the *substance* of *The Charleston Gazette* and *Washington Monthly* attacks.

The American media alternates between two images of the American labor movement: one is the image of

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"labor bosses" delivering their votes to chosen candidates; the other is an image of a labor leadership which is "out of touch" with its membership and therefore, politically ineffective. Logic tells us that these two mutually exclusive political images cannot both be right. The actual data from the 1984 election tells us that neither of them are.

According to election night surveys taken by the major networks, voters in "union households" voted for Mondale by a 54-46 percent margin, while nonunion voters favored Reagan by a 64-36 percent margin. The "spread" between the 8-point Mondale margin in "union households" and the 28-point Reagan margin in nonunion households was a substantial, net 36 points in favor of Mondale. (Our own survey of just AFL-CIO members showed an even stronger 61-39 [22-point] margin for Mondale.)

However, whether one uses the networks' "union household" figures (50 percent more likely to vote for Mondale) or the figures for just AFL-CIO members (nearly 70 percent more likely to vote for Mondale), that is a powerful result for such a large and varied group of unions as comprise the AFL-CIO. And, anyone even remotely familiar with today's American worker knows that he or she cannot be "delivered" by any organization. Union voters must be persuaded to support a given candidate, ballot proposition, or other political position. That is what AFL-CIO unions did in this year's presidential race, in their own internal communications efforts.

Indeed, given the diversity of the American labor movement today (ranging from low-skilled service workers to highly paid technical employees), this strong pro-Mondale showing, in the wake of the pro-Reagan tidal wave sweeping the rest of the country, is nothing short of remarkable.

The American labor movement and the millions of working people it represents are facing many difficult problems these days, but suffering from "softball" media coverage is clearly not one of them.

VIC FINGERHUT
Washington, D.C.

Vic Fingerhut is president of Fingerhut/Granados Opinion Research.

Measuring up to Kemp

The Washington Monthly astutely recognizes that Jack Kemp would probably be the Democrats' most formidable opponent for the presidency in 1988 ["What the Democrats Can Learn from Jack Kemp," Jonathan Rowe, January]. In doing so, you also illuminate the party's principal problem if it is to avoid permanent decline: regaining the offensive in the debate over how best to achieve consistent economic growth.

The depressing reality, I think, is that the main chance to do that has already been blown. The Bradley-Gephardt Fair Tax bill, or something similar, should have been the preeminent "new idea" of the 1984 campaign. If Gary Hart, in particular, had seized the tax issue from Republicans—campaigning on growth *and* "fairness"— he could have avoided the fallacious but ultimately crippling criticism of his campign: that he in fact had no "new ideas."

Now, however, the Reagan administration has again taken the offensive with the Treasury Department's version of the Fair tax. Head in the sand, old-line Democrats reacted predictably, reflexively criticizing the proposal because it comes from a Republican administration. A few others, observing that it increases business taxes while lowering rates for most individuals, recognize that the Treasury proposal is probably the most Democratic—capital D—tax reform proposal to emerge from the special-interest thicket in Washington in years. Nonetheless, if anything resembling the Treasury plan passes, the Republicans will get the political credit.

What, then, do the Democrats run on against someone such as Kemp in 1988? Management Guru Tom Peters says, "Management is THE issue in this country, not tax policy." Quite right. Management is THE issue if American companies are going to be able to compete in global markets against low-cost competition from abroad. It is extraordinarily important for individual firms in our economy to be run better. Less conflict and more cooperation between workers and managers; pushing decision-making authority farther down in the ranks; creating a sense of ownership among employees; jolly good ideas all, and Peters has been their most influential advocate.

But "management" as a *political* issue?

Picture this: Your average American voter is watching Jack Kemp and Gary Hart tromp through the snow in New Hampshire in February of 1988. Kemp, the football hero, is calling for lower taxes and having great fun bashing the Federal Reserve. Hart (or the 1988 Hart equivalent), perhaps a tad on the technocratic side, is calling for "better management."

Who wins in November?

WILLIAM J. POWELL JR.
Norwalk, Connecticut

Jonathan Rowe describes Jack Kemp as a "five foot, 10 inch" quarterback at Occidental College. Later, Kemp is elected to Congress and we are told he is now possessed of a "six foot body."

Nothing like a career in Congress to gain stature, is there?

RALPH A. BROOKS
New York, New York

Pooh-poohing pH

Thank you for publishing Eric Black's analysis of why regulators need a "don't do it if it's stupid" clause [January]. It is a most instructive story. I fear Mr. Black

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missed out on a few important points, however. I picked up on three.

First of all, the *Handbook of Chemistry and Physics* (p. 1623) states that a saturated solution of calcium hydroxide should have a pH of 12.4. How then, one has to ask, was a pH of 12.7 determined for the pile of lime? Was the pile contaminated with something more alkaline? Or was the pH reading in error? pH meters, for those who use them regularly, are notorious for erroneous readings. Doubt about the validity of pH readings, for instance, is one of the bones of contention in the acid rain saga.

Secondly, Mr. Black did not elaborate on why the beneficial reuse clause is considered so bad by some regulators. I believe some of them think it allows too enormous a loophole for the disposition of hazardous waste by unconventional and unregulated means. But it should be noted that beneficial reuse is almost literally written into the title of the nation's chief hazardous waste control act, RCRA, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Thirdly, as I read through the article, my soul was crying out for a regulation based on performance standards, rather than numerical standards. Regulators have quite simply got to decide what it is they want their regulations to do, and to trust other people to find innovative solutions within a performance standard. In the case of this pile of lime, it was clearly ridiculous to use the numerical standard of pH 12.5, when the performance standard of corrosivity was what the regulators had in mind as a definition for this kind of hazardous waste.

Performance is at the heart of Mr. Black's "don't do it if it's stupid" dictum. But performance standards can be defined, whereas stupidity is sometimes a matter of opinion.

PETER GARRETT
Augusta, Maine

Peter Garrett is a senior geologist with the Maine state Department of Environmental Protection.

Eric Black's article on the need for a "Stupidity Clause" describes vividly the symptoms of modern bureaucratic disease. I worked as an environmental engineer in state government for 12 years (the last seven in a regulatory capacity) and I have seen many similar examples of the bureaucrat's rigid respect for Stupidity. The fascinating challenge is to get at the root causes for such absurdity. I'm reminded of a Stan Laurel vignette where he attempts to peel a banana and finds another banana inside. Bureaucrats wrap their motives in layer upon layer of banana peels.

Most regulations already allow for an ad hoc Stupidity Clause—flexibility in interpretation or definition, variances, waivers, or ultimately to modify the regulations. Yet these "Don't do it if it's stupid" clauses are not applied in many cases. Based on my experiences, here is a sampling of the possible reasons:

1. The Grudge: An influential individual or group in the environmental agency is "sticking it" to the highway agency as retaliation for such things as very real environmental abuses in past highway construction. If the "hazardous waste" was on state forest land, it would have been handled very differently. MOTTO: Don't Get Mad, Get Even.

2. The Zinger: If agencies get too comfortable with each other, regulations get nibbled away. Most highway agencies would never get anything built if they didn't cut corners. The regulatory agency needs—now and then—to deliver an Electric Shock to the nibbling agency to reaffirm the vigor of its regulations. MOTTO: Back to the Doghouse, Fido.

3. Creative IOUs: If all regulations are rubber-stamped, there are no heros. If a regulation or bureaucrat holds things up and creates a crisis, then someone—the governor, other politicians, commissioners, can leap in as the sympathetic Mr. Fix-It and get credit for fixing a problem which should never have occurred in the first place. MOTTO: Invent a Heroic Act, Get an IOU.

4. Pride of Authorship: Whoever wrote the regulations thinks they are great and does not want to admit to flaws—especially those pointed out by engineers and laymen. MOTTO: I Wrote It, So It's Great.

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5. Unstable In-Box: Bureaucrats besieged by priority crises can avoid one demand on their time by ignoring any allegations of defective regulations. If they don't grant favors (admitting something is stupid) they don't have folks chasing after them for additional favors. Postponing today's crises often but not always ends up with worse problems for everyone later on. But where is there a bureaucrat who never procrastinated? MOTTO: Simple Decisions and Procrastination. Unload Today's In-Box.

6. Vultures: Bureaucrats have no faith in the political process. Any flexibility will be used by various "vultures" (competing agencies, lawyers, developers, public interest groups) to try to drive a truck through the breach. The bureaucrat's judgment call about "insignificant impacts on the environment" (a buzzword for "it's stupid") will be politically manipulated by PACs and political hacks from the governor's office worried about IOUs to favored supporters. Officials who must defend their view of "fairness" against "political favoritism" frequently feel they are putting their jobs on the line and undermining their job futures. It's safer to admit to no Stupidity loopholes. MOTTO: He Who Is Strong and Unyielding Attracts No Vultures.

I don't know whether I have peeled back all the layers of the banana, but if we understand the rules that Bureaucrats feel they work under, their actions become much more understandable. In some cases we might even be more sympathetic—like the religious concept of Sin and Forgiveness.

STEPHEN H. KAISER
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Stephen Kaiser was formerly the principal civil engineer for the state of Massachusetts.

A matter of interpretation

Someone sent me a copy of the December issue with Timothy Noah's article, "What David Broder Could Learn from Sally Quinn." Although technically correct, what you say about my attitude is entirely incorrect. [*Editor's note: MacDougall's textbook,* Interpretive Reporting, *was quoted in the course of demonstrating how society reporters of the 1930s were instructed to cover parties.*] It would not take much research to reveal that I am praised (or blamed) for making "inventive" interpretative reporting during the Depression.

It was tough going in the forties and fifties engaging in the debate on objectivity vs. interpretation. Until Elmer Davis and a few other professionals awakened, I was almost alone. What won for the believers in more than deadpan reporting was the realization that the press was largely responsible for the rise of Joe McCarthy because of its deadpan handling of his prevarications.

CURTIS D. MACDOUGALL
Evanston, Illinois

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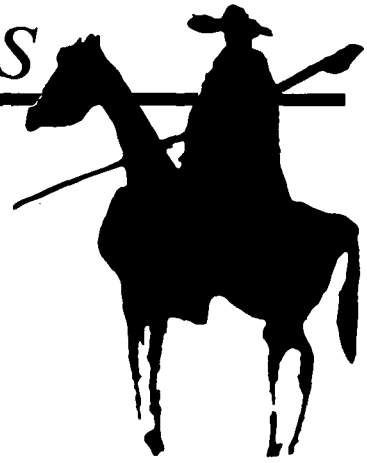
TILTING AT WINDMILLS



If you happened to read this column in December, you will understand how pleased I was by Gary Hart's call for a "genuine patriotism" in his speech last month in Boston. Rejecting Reagan's "patriotism consisting merely of nationalistic flag-waving, public relations, symbolism, and military interventionism," Hart said:

"Genuine patriotism must appeal to the deep sense in all of us...that there is a higher purpose for a great nation than...self-interest, materialism and selfishness."

Hart took the first step to transform this appealing rhetoric into reality by coming out for "a new system of national service—including both military and non-military opportunities—[that] will ask young Americans to return some of the advantages and investments they have received from our society."

If Hart makes his message concrete in other ways, by challenging people not only to serve their community and their country but to surrender government benefits they don't need and to share more generously with those who do need, I believe he could lead the party to victory in 1988.

Unfortunately, last year, after sounding as if he was going to issue the clarion call, he began to try to out-Mondale Mondale in his appeal to the special interests....

Our Metaphor of the Month Award goes to Tom Kenworthy of *The Washington Post*, who described the scene in the office of Governor Harry Hughes of Maryland as he was preparing to sign a popular bill for which the many politicians anxious to share in the credit were maneuvering for positions in camera range:

"Comptroller Louis L. Goldstein and state Senator Frank Shore—both noted for their ability to make the most of photo opportunities—competed for territory like basketball players working for a rebound."...

At a recent Continuing Legal Education seminar, Jay Foonberg, an attorney from Beverly Hills, California, offered this advice: "Bombard your clients with paper....One for the court, one for me, and one for the client who pays the fee." Samuel Smith, another lawyer from Miami, Florida, agreed: "To keep your client happy, send them copies of everything as a testament to your work."...

A lot of people—see "Letters," for example—think *The Washington Monthly* is anti-union. It is not. I grew up in West Virginia during the Depression. I saw the miserable conditions in which most miners lived and worked. Unions were desperately needed. They had my heartfelt support. They, both the AFL-CIO and the United Mine Workers, supported me when I ran for the state legislature. But I was never blindly uncritical of organized labor. One of the reasons I was attracted to John and Robert Kennedy in the late fifties was their fight against union corruption. And, during the sixties and

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seventies, I and the other editors of this magazine became increasingly critical of the growing tendency of unions to demand wage increases without regard to productivity increases. Sometimes there seemed to be almost a conscious collusion between workers, managers, and stockholders to pay higher wages, salaries, and dividends without regard to the long-range health of their company or the nation's economy. This had the effect, as the company's prices became less competitive and its market share declined, of reducing employment opportunities. The union workers were in effect "pulling up the ladder," taking care of themselves at the expense of future job seekers. What happened is that this short-term selfishness hurt the company and ultimately the workers themselves, who lost their own jobs as the market share continued to decline.

We admire unions like the one at Weirton Steel that accepted a wage cut in return for stock in their company. Their plant is flourishing with a profit of $60.6 million for 1984, and, unlike a lot of other steelworkers, those Weirton workers still have jobs....

Speaking of greedy managers, consider Jerome Lewis, chairman of the Petro-Lewis Corporation. He took $163,091 in bonuses from his company in 1984, a year in which it suffered a loss of $54 million. Lewis also had a stock option. Instead of expressing his faith in the company by using the option to buy its shares, he took $1.1 million in cash....

There seem to be a lot of college freshmen out there who are ready and willing to follow Mr. Lewis's example. According to a survey conducted by UCLA and the American Council on Education, the percentage of freshmen who say a "very important" reason for attending college is to make money has risen from 49.9 percent in 1971 to 66.7 percent last year....

The AMA says medical malpractice claims are adding $15 billion to the nation's health costs. According to an AMA report called "Professional Liability in the 80's," 60 percent of all American obstetricians/gynecologists have been sued, 20 percent of them three or more times. The hidden cost that can't be estimated is all the unnecessary tests and treatment prescribed by doctors who want to build a record that will look good in court if they are sued.

This is one more illustration of why we must get rid of the system of tort liability that has people running to a lawyer every time they think they have been injured. In the short term, a no-fault compensation system to take care of the injured may be the answer. In the long run, I think the only solution is a national health service that would take care of these injuries along with the rest of the nation's health needs at fees set by the government. In either case, no-fault or national health service, malpractice should be punished by license withdrawal in which other physicians would participate but not govern. Only when licensing boards are open to—and dominated by—a cross section of the public will the public's and not the profession's interest be protected....

If you have attended many congressional hearings, you will sympathize with Senator Strom Thurmond's complaint to a *Washington Times* reporter that committee members were absent so frequently that they did not realize they were repeating questions that had already been asked:

"Yesterday and today, too, we've had duplication after duplication—not only duplicating what was brought out last year but even yesterday and today we've had duplications."

Remember Senator Joseph Montoya during the Watergate hearings? I don't believe he asked a single question that had not already been covered by his colleagues. I refer, of course, to the questions one could understand; many of Montoya's rambled to the point of incoherence as he seemed to be imitating the late character actor, Raymond Walburn, playing a drunken senator....

If you have to get into trouble with a federal agency, I suggest you choose the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Recently HUD found that the City of Baltimore had improperly

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spent $250,000 in federal grants. HUD ordered the city to repay the money immediately. Well, that sounds pretty stern, you say. But now the other shoe falls, and, as the Baltimore *Sun* explains, it falls gently indeed:

"The order says, essentially, that as long as Baltimore repays the $250,000, the city can then have the money back to use for other projects that are allowed by the rules."...

The moral decision that *Time* and *The New Republic* (see David Owen's article on page 48) and all the major newspapers refuse to make—to reject cigarette advertising—has been made by Fred Vandegrift and Harris Rayl, the publisher and editor of the *Salina*, (Kansas) *Journal*. Rayl explains:

"Because the advertising encourages smoking and smoking damages health and even kills people, we couldn't keep printing the advertising."

The decision will cost the *Journal* $40,000 in advertising revenue annually....

A lot of laws that sound good are really paper tigers because they contain no enforcement power. Such is the case with the state of New York's freedom of information law. Officials can simply deny they have the information sought, and nothing can be done about it. This has led the district attorney of Nassau County to propose an amendment that would make it a misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail or a fine, to knowingly respond falsely to a freedom of information request.

It seems to me that we ought to consider more such penalties for willfully unresponsive behavior by bureaucrats at all levels of government. The best solution to the problem of unaccountable government is giving political authorities who can be fired by the people the authority to fire subordinates who are derelict in their duties. But until that reform is made—and I fear the day is distant—the possibility of a year in the slammer might do wonders for bureaucratic performance....

Last month I wrote about a problem widespread throughout the federal government—the malfunctioning computer. It recently cropped up at the IRS, and the result was a very unpleasant experience for almost 10,000 businesses. These companies had paid their third quarter taxes for 1984 but the payments did not get on the right computer.

"We were trying to correct information from hard disk to computer tape," one IRS spokesman explained to UPI. "The tape itself was defective and we had a problem with the header."

The result was that the IRS dispatched four threatening letters to each of the companies, with warmly reassuring words like "final notice," "proceed with enforcement," "levy upon your properties," "federal tax liens," and "public notice to your creditors."

To large and prosperous businesses, such threats cause little alarm. They just call up their lawyers and accountants and say straighten this thing out. But for a small businessman struggling to keep his head above water, it can produce instant panic. Even if his assets aren't seized, as they apparently were not in these cases, a heart—and a business—failure can result. The lawyer and accountant he called have to be paid, and, if he has no profits, the deductibility of their fees, which is such a comfort to the better-heeled, will be of no help at all to him....

There's a happier tax situation over at General Dynamics. It has not paid any federal income tax since 1972. Yet, for the same period, the company has reported profits of more than $2 billion. It seems General Dynamics uses an accounting system that permits it to report losses to the IRS while reporting profits to its shareholders. Why is it that these techniques never seem to be available to you and me?...

Well, almost never. There is, of course, one tax dodge that is rapidly becoming a favorite of the middle class. It is, of course, our old friend the tax-deductible vacation masquerading as a conference or convention. This winter the Tennessee Bar Association is holding a symposium in where else but Ellmau, Austria, "one of the

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most magnificent skiing resort areas in the world." During this year the Tufts University School of Medicine plans to hold its Fourth International Medical Seminar, which requires participants to visit Egypt, Israel, and Greece. The rigorous medical curriculum includes Jerusalem (the Old and New Cities), the Pyramids, the Sphinx, Luxor, Karnak, the Acropolis, and a cruise to Hydra and Poros.

But my favorite is the case of Dick Kienast, the sheriff of Pitkin County, Colorado, who charged a 26-day trip to Hawaii to his office's training budget. Connoisseurs of the great legends of junketing will be delighted to learn that the name of the county commissioner who rebuked the sheriff by saying, "To put a 26-day trip to Hawaii on your training budget is absolutely absurd and appalling," is Michael Kinsley.

The sheriff's closest competition for our official Traveler of the Month Award is the outgoing attorney general, William French Smith, who in January prepared himself for retirement by taking a taxpayer-financed trip to Rome. This is the third trip we've paid for Smith to take to Italy. We've also sent him to Thailand, Pakistan, Egypt, France, Mexico, Peru, Japan, Bolivia, Spain, Morocco, Israel, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland.

One final word on tax-deductible conferences. It appears that the organizers are coming out of the closet, boldly calling a spade a spade, and daring the IRS to do anything about it. At least this is the case with the Middle Atlantic State Correctional Association, which headlines the announcement of its 47th Annual Conference, "PLAN YOUR VACATION NOW."...

Back to unions. My greatest heroes in the labor movement were John L. Lewis, as he was in the thirties, roaring defiance of the coal barons, and Walter Reuther, with his profound understanding that labor had to be ready to sacrifice to get a stagnant industry moving. Today, Albert Shanker, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, is my favorite. The man must have an enormous ego to have his union pay to run his column each week in *The New York Times*. But, ego or not, he meets the most important test for a modern labor leader—the ability to begin to acknowledge where the workers have to change as well as where management must improve. Shanker is now advocating a national teachers examination that would meet the issue of competence head-on by testing, first, the prospective teacher's knowledge of his subject, and second, his knowledge of how to teach it. Then Shanker supports a two- or three-year internship to determine whether the teacher can actually deliver in the classroom. This is light

American Violence and Public Policy

edited by Lynn A. Curtis

"Twelve scholars, most of them previously associated with the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence appointed by President Johnson in 1968, take a new look at the course of violent crime in the US and reevaluate public policy. . . . **A serious, unflinching attempt to rethink this immense, ever-growing, and inflammatory national problem."** —*Kirkus Reviews*

"In a pragmatic way, *American Violence and Public Policy* explains thoughtfully what can be done if America wants to reduce collective and individual violence and if Americans truly care about all of our citizens." —Judge A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

"An important contribution to the debate over criminal justice policy, it is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand why past policies have failed, and what the remedies really are." —Charles Silberman, author of *Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice* $23.00

Yale University Press

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years better than the totally defensive position taken by the National Education Association. But I'm suspicious of the how-to-teach test, which could be a way to perpetuate the meaningless methodology courses that have corrupted teacher education for so long....

David Stockman deserves high praise for taking on the scandalous military retirement system. He even inspired the first clear statement of the scandal I have ever seen written by a reporter for *The Washington Post*— or for any other leading newspaper for that matter:

"These are the essential statistics to know about the military retirement system: the average person retires at age 42 at half-pay, and the program will cost taxpayers $18.3 billion next year."

That was the lead sentence of an article by *The Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz, whose reporting shows a sophistication about Washington's institutions that I wish were shared by more of his colleagues. Recently Kurtz wrote about the groups in Washington with innocent, objective, or even uplifting and patriotic names that mask dubious purposes:

"Take the Committee for Energy Awareness, which launched a $30-million advertising and lobbying campaign in 1983 to promote the safety of nuclear power. What its slick, low-key television ads failed to mention is that the group gets more than half its funding from 50 utilities, some of which have billed their unsuspecting customers for the media blitz.

"Recently there has been a new public service ad that begins: 'Stay tuned for a medical bulletin on Reye's Syndrome.' The announcer assures us there's no proof that any drug causes this potentially fatal disease in children. The sponsor is the Committee on the Care of Children.

"Of course, the ad doesn't say that health officials have been warning for two years that giving aspirin to certain sick children increases their chances of contracting Reye's Syndrome. Nor does it mention that the Committee on the Care of Children was organized with aspirin-industry funding that was channeled through another group, the International Science Exchange. Federal officials recently called the ad 'seriously misleading.'

"During last October's first anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Grenada, nationwide ceremonies and campus rallies were sponsored by the U.S.A. Foundation. A few phone calls revealed that U.S.A. Foundation Chairman Jack Abramoff also happens to head the College Republican National Committee, and that other College Republicans were helping to stage the Grenada extravaganza. They insisted it was not designed to aid President Reagan's reelection. This is not surprising since the U.S.A. Foundation is what's known in I.R.S. jargon as a '501/C3' organization, meaning that its tax-exempt status can be yanked if it engages in partisan politics.

"A spokesman for Abramoff explained the arrangement: 'When he has his College Republican hat on, he's partisan. When he has his U.S.A. hat on, he's nonpartisan.'

"No such identity crisis afflicts the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH), which bills itself as a conservative public-interest group. It issues a steady stream of reports contending that saccharin does not cause cancer, that the pesticide EDB is safe, that there is no proven link between heart disease and a diet high in fat and cholesterol.

"At least a third of the group's funding comes from food, chemical, and petroleum companies—from Coca-Cola and Dow Chemical to Eli Lilly and Shell Oil—that have an interest in the products that ACSH keeps defending. But its director, Elizabeth M. Whelan, challenges the notion that her group is beholden to its financial backers.

"This rationale seemed to evaporate, however, when the ACSH filed a friend-of-the-court brief in a 1982 lawsuit brought by the Formaldehyde Institute. The suit succeeded in overturning a federal ban on insulation made with formaldehyde, a suspected carcinogen. It turns out that the ACSH's legal brief was paid for by Georgia-Pacific Co., a leading manufacturer of formaldehyde and a member of the Formaldehyde Institute. Georgia-Pacific paid its Washington law firm $40,000 to write a 45-page brief, which ACSH then submitted under its name to a federal appeals court."...

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How does a hospital go about deciding how to staff its emergency room? Consider the reason that, according to the Tracy, California *Press*, the Tracy Community Memorial Hospital decided to award its emergency-room staffing contract to Spectrum Emergency, Inc.:

"They felt Spectrum, with a larger nationwide organization, had more expertise in marketing and public relations, areas that are becoming more important in the operation of emergency-care facilities.". . .

Speaking of medicine, did you know that, according to *The New York Times*, "about 28 percent of the nation's $75 billion yearly Medicare budget now goes to maintaining people in their last year of life, and the bulk of that is spent during the last month"?. . .

Our Truer Words Were Never Spoken Award goes to Michael Ledeen, who had this to say in a recent issue of *The Wall Street Journal*:

"After having served as a special adviser to the secretary of state from 1981 to 1982, I can guarantee that both the State Department and the Pentagon are probably twice their necessary size.". . .

Just as we sometimes seem anti-union because we are critical of some union practices, we also can seem anti-bureaucrat when we expose the latest misdeeds of government agencies. But we also have our bureaucratic Walter Reuthers, public servants for whom we have intense admiration.

An example, name unknown, is the AID official who 19 years ago insisted upon moving ahead with research for a malaria vaccine at a time when the respectable consensus was that it couldn't be produced. Now the effort he initiated is, according to *Science* magazine, close to success. Soon we will have a vaccine against a disease that afflicts 300 million people a year and causes two to four million deaths. What's more, this development will have been an act of generosity by the American people, who do not suffer from the disease, to the rest of the world, particularly the poorer nations, where malaria is most widespread. . . .

Another example of courage in support of teacher testing is provided by William Raspberry, a columnist for *The Washington Post.* Raspberry is black. So is the main authority he cites in favor of testing, Bernard R. Gifford, the dean of the graduate school of education at the University of California at Berkeley. Both men deserve praise for their courage because the group most hurt by testing is black teachers. But Raspberry and Gifford are willing to face the fact that, if poor black children are to get the education that can lift them out of the ghetto, they must have good teachers, black or white. . . .

This, of course, does not mean that all current testing programs are perfect. Most, as Albert Shanker points out, are probably too easy. Cultural bias is always a danger. Gene I. Maeroff of *The New York Times* recently pointed out that this bias can take surprising forms, as a study of ninth graders at Wingate High School in Brooklyn revealed:

"The study shows that, when the time limits for tests are eased, the students are capable of reading and understanding work on a higher level than would be presumed from their scores on timed, standardized tests."

It was blacks and other minorities who gained the most from the extra time. This suggests that allowing more time—except, of course, for jobs for which reading speed is truly relevant—might be a major step in increasing the fairness of testing generally. . . .

The most heartening story I have heard in a long time is about the response of the Canadian Eskimos, called Inuit, to the plight of the hungry in Ethiopia.

"Typically poor themselves, the Inuit have," reports the Portland *Oregonian*, "raised at least $60,000 or many times more per person than the Canadian average."

Jobless people who had no money to give contributed soapstone carvings, embroidered parkas, and sealskin boots to be auctioned at fund-raising events. At Eskimo Point, a community that itself had suffered from starvation two decades ago, 1,100 people raised almost $7,000 donating their own clothes and furniture.

—Charles Peters

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RALPH NADER RECONSIDERED

By Jonathan Rowe

On a blustery evening last month Ralph Nader was speaking at the city hall in Takoma Park, Maryland, a community just over the District of Columbia line. The subject of the meeting was Buyers Up, Nader's latest undertaking, in which homeowners and small businesses combine their purchasing power to negotiate a lower price for home heating fuel. To date Buyers Up has signed up almost 3,000 members in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. They are now enjoying heating fuel prices 25 cents per gallon lower than those offered to the average consumer.

I was there because I had fallen somewhat out of touch with Nader since leaving his organization in the seventies. You don't see him on the news as much as you used to, and it's no longer true that every other bright young person you meet in Washington is hankering to work with him. How is he faring in these conservative times?

He may not be on the news as much, but the auditorium is almost full, despite the nasty weather. Nader seems genial and relaxed—a side of the man that only close associates used to see now breaking through the guarded public persona. Patiently, he leads the gathering through the steps that connect a 25-cent-per-gallon discount on heating fuel to the larger idea of an economy in which consumers—or "buyers" as Nader now prefers to call them—have real say.

"A few years ago," he says, "I thought the government would defend the American public. Now we have to develop a new kind of power, based on the interest of the buying group." He goads them with a little trademark Nader sarcasm: "What are you *getting* for the extra 25 cents a gallon [that dealers are charging]? I mean, they aren't giving you gourmet oil." Then to the larger view: "The consequences of homeowners banding together goes far beyond saving a few dollars, as important as that is for the family budget." For one thing, he says, it's a question of community. "Today people have no need to connect with their neighbors. Buyers' groups can be the early links that bond people together. Then they'll start asking questions about municipal services, the schools, pollution. Then there will be something worthy of being called a community." Betraying a bit of a preoccupation, he adds, "and not isolated citizens ready to be prey to multinational corporations."

"To get in the mood," Nader continues, "the next time you go to Sears and they give you a form to fill out, cross out everything you don't like and put in things you do like, such as doubling the warranty." He's enjoying this. "Or go to the supermarket resolved not to buy anything but just walk up and down the aisles taking notes. When the manager approaches you, inform him that you represent a group of several hundred households and that if his store passes, your group will call to set up an appointment to negotiate on such things as the nutritional value of the food he carries." Nader conjures up a future in which consumers have their own attorneys sitting across the table from the insurance companies negotiating policies; in which leases are written more in favor of the tenant; in which "big buying groups will have more leverage and power to set their own terms in the market place."

It's a refreshing change from the mainly top-down consumer protection style of the seventies; people are going to *do* something, instead of just being protected by a government agency, and it gets the blood moving. Nader has pretty much withdrawn from the Washington news scene and has turned his network of organizations, called Public Citizen, over to his closest associates. "Nowadays I don't even have an organization, and that's as it should be," he recently told an interviewer. He spends his time on "empowerment" projects like Buyers Up and Citizen Utili-

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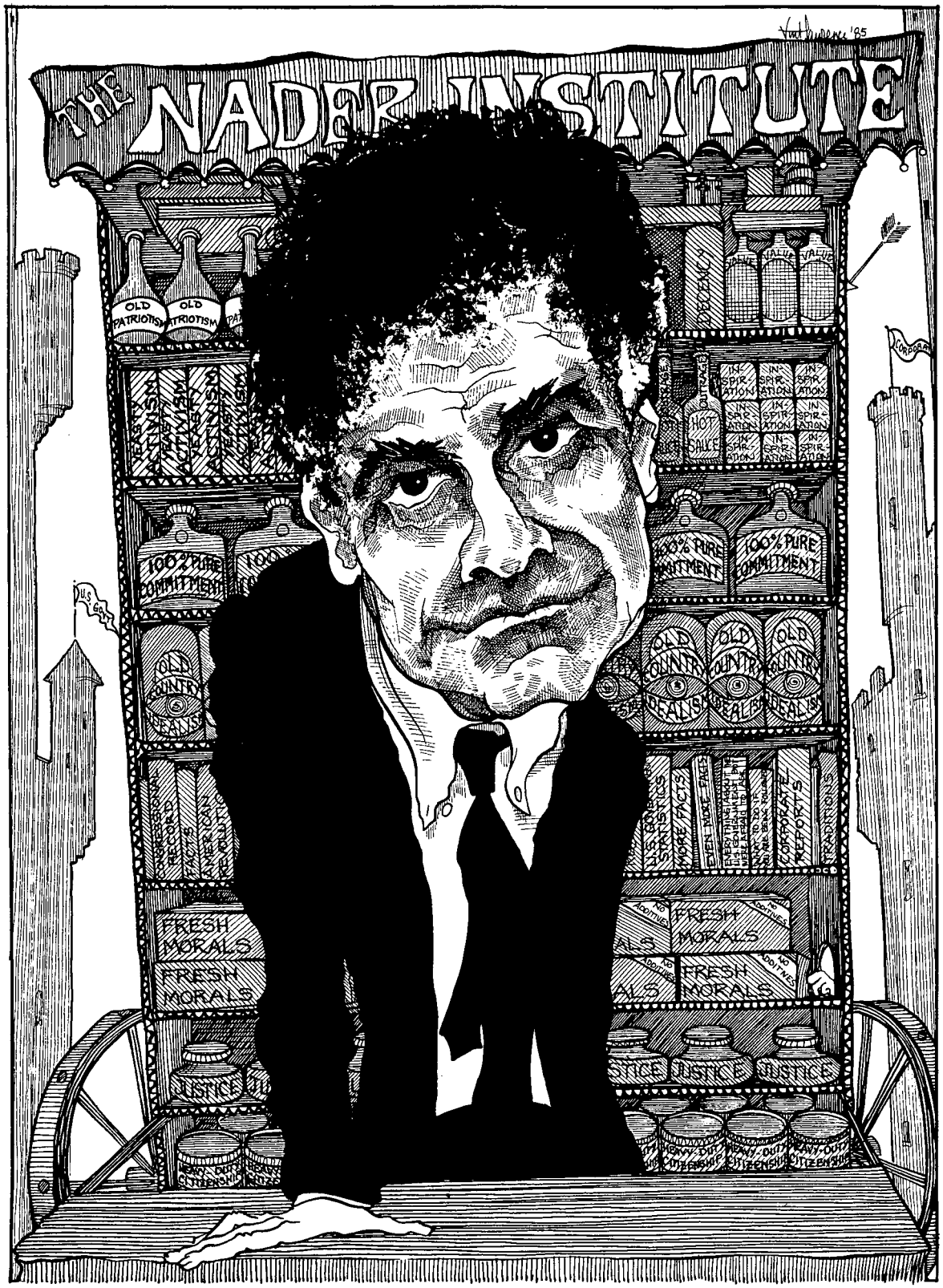

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> 'Is it so implausible, so distasteful,' Nader asked, 'that a man would believe deeply enough in his work to dedicate his life to it?'

ty Boards (CUBs), organizations that represent rate payers before public utility boards and that are financed through solicitations the utilities have to include from time to time in utility bills.

Fifteen years ago, when student leaders wanted to change the "system," Nader was relentlessly empirical, talking about hot dogs and automobiles. Now that the nation has reverted back to the conservatism of the fifties, it is Nader who is saying, as he did to a law audience recently, that "it is time for us to move on the structure and strategy of power and build the institutions that can deal with these problems."

"We gotta do something"

When Ralph Nader arrived in Washington in 1964, Lyndon Johnson was president, there was no such thing as a consumer or environmental movement, and most of the members of Nader's class at Harvard Law School (1958) were well on their way to remunerative careers. After graduation Nader had traveled as a freelance journalist and then worked in a small law practice in Hartford, Connecticut, where he saw that most of the legal problems of ordinary people went without redress. "The cases were too small," he said. "They'd just be pushed around." Nader was interested in the idea of an ombudsman—a sort of public advocate for such people within the government—and traveled to Scandanavia to explore the idea. Upon his return he drafted bills for the Massachusetts and Connecticut legislatures and wrote on the subject, but with little result. "I had watched years go by and nothing happened," he said afterwards regarding his decision to come to Washington. "Before that, decades had gone by. I decided it took total commitment."

In Washington, Nader developed networks among public-spirited reporters and congressional staff members, feeding them stories and issues. His own work centered on highway safety, an interest prompted by the accidents he had observed while hitchhiking around the country. Nader had written a long paper in law school on the liability of manufacturers for unsafe automobile design and had pursued this issue in his legal practice and writing. His book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, was a stinging indictment of the Corvair and, more fundamentally, of a business enterprise that showed more concern about styling considerations than about the basic question of safety.

The industry had always preferred to keep safety discussions focused on the driver and the road; now Nader was changing the premise of the debate, directing attention to the car and the company that made it. In a blunder that has entered the American folklore, General Motors put a private detective on Nader's tail to dig up dirt about his personal life. When GM President James Roche had to apologize publicly, before a Senate committee, it propelled Nader out of his backroom obscurity in Washington and made him a national hero.

GM's snooping on Nader helped ensure passage of the Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the basic auto safety legislation. Then followed a spate of laws on kindred subjects, such as contamination of meat and poultry, natural gas pipelines, and coal mine safety. Nader seemed to personify the nation's concerns aroused earlier in the decade by books, such as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, about the mounting detritus of industrial society. He was being called a "consumer advocate." But more significantly, he tapped a vein of social concern among scores of young people then in college or law school, myself included.

I remember the day, in a law school dorm, that I happened upon a *Playboy* interview with this Nader fellow. The magazine dubbed him the "zealous consumer crusader," but it was the crusader rather than the consumer part that lit the fire. Here was a man who lived in a cheap rooming house, owned no car, and kept his material wants to a minimum so he could do the

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work he really cared about. The pictures on the opening spread showed him in varying degrees of discomfort, as though defying the feel-good aura of the magazine. There was a touch of defiance, too, in the narrow collars and ties that were decidely uncool at the time. "Is it so implausible, so distasteful," Nader said, "that a man would believe deeply enough in his work to dedicate his life to it?"

Nader's circle of associates grew into teams of students, unfortunately dubbed "Nader's raiders," investigating everything from the ownership of land in California to the company state of Delaware to (in my own case) the Interstate Commerce Commission, the oldest federal agency and assuredly the most boring of them all. These teams evolved into the network of organizations that today employ between 75 and 100 people carrying on the research and lobbying work that Nader started.

If Nader became an inspiration for young people, he also became a national symbol for taking on the big guys, an indication that one man still could make a difference. "Americans are starved," he said, "for acts of the individual in a conflict situation outside the sports arena." Everyone who worked with Nader in those years remembers the thousands of letters, many on ruled dime-store paper and addressed simply to "Ralph Nader, White House, Washington, D.C.," imploring his intervention in all manner of life problems and complaints. And incidents like the time, during the ICC study, a group of truck drivers drove seven hours from upstate New York to show us firsthand evidence of the safety violations in which their companies were engaged. "Look here, Ralph, look at these logs. They're makin' us run 12, 13 hours—can't make those runs in the time they say. Guys are takin' pills to stay up, then it's booze to go to sleep. Look at these equipment reports, Ralph. I've been reporting this brake problem for months now and look at this. Nothin'. People are gonna get killed, Ralph. We gotta do something."

The problems often seemed overwhelming, and you could see why Nader was thinking in terms of new organizations and agencies to do something about them. Sometimes he could provide tangible assistance. When two of his young attorneys helped tiny (population 905) Anmoore, West Virginia curb Union Carbide's plant, which was spewing horrendous industrial wastes over the town, Buck Gladden said simply, "I'd like to say one thing to Ralph Nader. I'd like to thank him for being."

Bad neighbors

Not everyone, of course, was thanking Nader for being. Free market conservatives accused him of trying to substitute his own judgment for that of the "market"—as though you and I actually get to stand over the shoulder of the auto designers and choose the safety features we would like built into our car. Their stock epithet became "self-appointed," as in "self-appointed consumer advocate," as though Nader should have gotten an official appointment before presuming to act like a citizen. Business mavericks like Robert Townsend of Avis, author of *Up the Organization*, liked the way Nader was jostling the sacred cows, but in the boardrooms alarms were sounding. The mood was represented by a memo Lewis Powell wrote for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce before he was appointed to the Supreme Court, urging a corporate counteroffensive against the Nader menace. "No thoughtful person can question that the American economic system is under broad attack," Powell wrote, calling Nader "perhaps the single most effective antagonist of American business." Quoting *Fortune*, Powell went on to warn that Nader "aimed at smashing utterly the target of his hatred, which is corporate power."

Powell was bewildered at this turn of events. "As every business executive knows," he went on, "few elements of American society today have as little influence in government as the American businessman, the corporation, or even millions of corporate stockholders." But Powell was right that Nader was raising fundamental questions about a subject that had receded from public debate in the prosperity of postwar America and has been swept aside again today—the economic and political power of the large corporation. Carping and obsessive as Nader can sometimes be on the subject, it was an analysis that rang true and was rooted not in foreign ideologies but in native American values.

The starting point was simply to apply to these institutions called corporations the same standards of civil behavior that we apply regularly to individuals. What would we say about a neighbor who poured toxic wastes into our air and water? "I don't know of any hoard of hippies or yippies who have managed to smog New York City or contaminate the Gulf of Mexico," he would say. The new nature of corporate violence tended to make us oblivious to it. A hundred years ago companies subjected workers to conditions that were tangible and given to graphic

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depiction. But such hazards as radiation and carcinogenic additives to food assault us silently and invisibly. We are "biologically obsolete" regarding the new violence that surrounds us, Nader said.

Then there was the broader realm of corporate economic crime, which was similarly elusive because abstract. "If you were to send ten pickpockets to New York and each of them were to do 50 jobs a day, that would, I suppose, make front-page news. But set up a system of acquisition that is derivative and obscure, like the oil depletion allowance or import quotas and nobody pays any attention. . . ." Often, such behavior violated the corporation's own professed standards of free market principle. Pollution, for example, was really a form of socializing costs. Instead of cleaning up its smokestacks, the company shifts the costs onto the people in the community who have to pay doctor bills for emphysema resulting from the plant's pollution.

These problems of course had implications for consumers, but they raised much broader questions of public policy.

Why do institutions called corporations behave in this manner? That the question itself sounds naive suggests how inured we have become to an unsatisfactory system. The answer, Nader said, was the erosion in law of a very old-fashioned value—personal responsibility. "I am responsible for my actions," he said, "But who is responsible for those of GM?" The corporation had become an institutional shield buffering people from the consequences of their own actions or omissions.

Sheer economic power is part of it, but also at fault is the form of corporation that has evolved in this country. As Nader and two associates pointed out in *Constitutionalizing the Corporation*, the U.S. Constitution doesn't even mention corporations, as improbable as that would seem today. Like the federal bureaucracy, they were not anticipated in the system of checks and balances which the framers devised to prevent the concentration of power. A "corporation" back then was granted a special charter by a state legislature to perform a specific public function, such as building a toll road or a canal. To undertake projects like these required large amounts of capital, which investors would not put up if they were to be personally liable for the whole enterprise. The corporate form shielded investors from personal liability for the actions of their business; but in exchange for this extraordinary exemption from common law rules of responsibility, the enterprise had to keep strictly within the bounds of the specific project for which it was chartered. The charter thus served to keep the corporation generally within the compass of community values.

But in the middle of the last century, this bargain unraveled. "Free incorporation" laws permitted anyone to adopt the corporate form for any undertaking they desired. They could enjoy the benefits of limited liability without the corresponding responsibilities. As states like Delaware and N ew Jersey began to bid against one another to attract the burgeoning corporations, the erosion of individual responsibility extended to the managers of the business as well as the owners. Charters became an exemption from responsibilities rather than a statement of them. It is common, for example, for by-laws to provide that corporations will pay for the legal expenses of officers and directors accused of breaking the law. Nader is commonly called "anti-business," but the overriding theme in his work has been to find ways to bring corporations back within the pale of individual responsibility.

Secular monks

But Nader saw that it wasn't enough merely to point the finger at corporations. "The most important question that can be asked about any society at any time is how much effort do citizens spend exercising their civic responsibility," he said. And again, "We can't possibly have a democracy with 200 million Americans and only a handful of citizens." For the past 15 years he has goaded every conceivable audience, from trial lawyers and doctors to psychologists and engineers, to do more. "You are too high on rhetoric, too short on commitment, and perhaps too self-indulgent," was a typical remark to college audiences in the early seventies.

He was, in short, drawing the connection between social policy and life practice. How could you be committed to citizenship, to achieving your ideals, if you were preoccupied with making money? How could you expect to deny corporate power in the political arena without saying no to its intrusions in the personal arena in the form of consumption that we don't need or that may be harmful? He complained about institutions like Harvard Law School ("a high-priced tool factory") that train professionals without an ethic of commitment or service. "Harvard Law School never raised the question of sacrifice. . . . Nothing. The icons were not those who had sacrificed at all." Nader was even talking about the need for "secular monks" to com-

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mit themselves to the work of change with the same single-mindedness and indifference to material rewards of the religious orders of past ages. "You've got to practice what you preach," he said, "so you can preach what you practice."

It was Nader's commitment to the old-fashioned virtues of individual hard work, thrift, and civic responsibility that put him right at the geological fault line between profession and practice in American life—between the values a Reagan kitchen cabinet member might profess and the values his company spreads among the populace through its advertising. Self-indulgence has become a form of social control. As long as we are preoccupied with our own advancement, we are not asking the questions that need to be asked. Corporations could deal with a government agency. But how were they going to recruit talented young people if these kids insisted on asking bothersome questions about the worth of what the company was doing? How were they going to market consumer goods to abstemious people?

If this could seem a specter in the nation's boardrooms, it was also unsettling in Washington, D.C., where commitment is expected to remain within polite limits, and where many people see no inconsistency between aspiring for a six-figure salary on the one hand and social values that include a cleaner environment or helping the poor on the other. Nader was saying that there was an individual price to be paid, and ordered his own life accordingly.

It was enough to make people squirm a bit, and reporters were not exceptions. Granted, Nader's unconventional manner, and frugalities such as buying 12 pairs of shoes and four dozen socks at the PX before leaving the Army, might understandably arouse curiosity. But reporters have tended to dismiss Nader's life habits as eccentricities or as dark symptoms of psychological disorder, and have been reluctant to come to grips with the life values that inform them. Typical was the somewhat querulous observation by Juan Williams in *The Washington Post* Sunday magazine a couple of years back: "He's too busy for fiction, just as he's too busy to own a car, too busy to have a family, too busy to care about clothes, or anything but reforming the nation for consumers." And Ralph, you call yourself a citizen? Still others have taken Nader's reputation as a test of their journalistic spurs. An example is David Sanford, who, when with *The New Republic*, wrote a mean little tract that inflated petty failings into high matters of state, in a manner that suggested Sanford might have a promising second career in divorce law.

> Nader reminds us that enterprise isn't just in the pecuniary realm, that citizenship is no less a channel for individual initiative in which imagination and innovation are desperately needed.

Loving the law

This is not to say that Nader is above criticism. One is a lingering ambivalence regarding the electoral arena.

Early on, Nader was accused of operating in a "Lone Ranger" manner, using the press and congressional allies almost single-handedly to generate momentum for legislative reform. The results he achieved in the early years did arise more from the way members of Congress feared the bad publicity he could generate than from the clout of an actual army of citizen supporters.

This was understandable. Nader had stepped into the breach and become a lobbyist for the public when no one else was. Furthermore, many of the issues he addresses are not the kind that individually stir a continuing groundswell of support. People with hundreds of life concerns will

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never work up as much intensity on an issue like automobile bumpers as the industry for which those bumpers are a form of daily bread. But at the same time, Nader has shown an impatience with representative government when it is slow to see the light.

Early on, Nader's imagination was captured by the role of the crusading attorney who prevailed because law, facts, and tactics, rather than a majority, were on his side. "The judiciary is the citadel for the minority view," he told *Rolling Stone*. "They don't count votes in court, they count rights. And also, when it works well, it works because courts are insulated from the usual manipulative power plays in the executive and legislative branches," such as campaign contributions and the like.

The proposed Consumer Protection Agency, for which Nader worked tirelessly for almost a decade, illustrated a tendency to seek solutions in this judicial mold. Federal agencies like the Federal Trade Commission and the Food and Drug Administration are besieged by industry lobbyists on hundreds of matters affecting daily life, from fairness standards for advertising to the drugs permitted on the market. Rarely are representatives of a larger public able to weigh in with equal measure on the other side. The CPA was to be a sort of institutional lawyer that would make up for this failing, participating in—or initiating—proceedings at the other agencies on the consumers' behalf.

The problem was that those agencies were set up to protect the public in the first place. If they aren't doing their job—which in many cases they aren't—isn't the answer to elect a president and a congress who will give us tough minded regulators who really want to protect the public? "Power has got to be insecure to be responsive," Nader has observed. "It's got to have something to lose." Electoral politics are our basic engine of governmental responsiveness, messy and imperfect as they are.

Nader has done his share to put heat on congressmen he regards as wrong. And nobody has done more speaking around the country to build a constituency for the kinds of reforms he represents. But there hasn't been a corresponding effort to develop better candidates and mobilize a genuine electoral base. On the whole, Nader has kept at arm's length from the electoral arena.

Electoral democracy is not, of course, the only kind. The groups and causes Nader has supported certainly enrich the climate in which electoral politics take place. Members of a Buyers Up are likely to be more attuned than others to consumer issues. Then too, one man can't do everything. But while we are building new institutions, don't we have to attend to the oldest and most basic, the way the Right wingers like Richard Viguerie are? Ultimately, it's a *political* movement the country needs.

Are goods good?

Why does this man call himself a "consumer advocate" in the first place? He's about as close to a nonconsumer as you will find. Sure there are consumer problems, like one-sided warranties and defective products. But these hardly define the universe of important issues, let alone the qualities of citizenship and commitment Nader has embodied so eloquently. Doesn't he risk trivializing his movement by casting it in the image of *Consumer Reports*?

Nader really regards consumer issues like unsafe cars as teaching devices. As a student, he said, he used to talk in terms of broad world problems. "Then I realized that you have to be more concrete if you want to reach people." Start with the cars, then people might begin to ask questions about the kind of companies that make them. Then too, there are tight strictures upon public debate in this country; it's hard to talk about corporate power through media that are prime examples of that power. Addressing these concerns as consumer issues allows Nader to reach an audience broader than the readers of the leftish magazines.

In Nader's mind a real consumer movement represents much more than the smart shopper mentality of *Consumer Reports*. In a recent essay in a volume titled, *Beyond Reagan*, Nader gives the consumer movement a surprisingly rich theoretical basis, sketching out the links between his personal nonconsumption and his "consumerist" concerns.

Nader sees the consumer movement as a fundamental challenge to the premises of Western economics both left and right. From Ricardo to Marx on down, he writes, Western economists have viewed the world "from the production side of the market—from capital and labor and selling." This fixation with production, Nader argues, causes us to ask the wrong questions. If the gross national product goes up next quarter, the economists will break out the champagne. But what if a closer examination reveals that the larger GNP was due primarily to increased consumption of alcohol and tobacco and to a rash

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of automobile accidents that caused the purchases of medical services and replacement parts to soar? The public—as consumers—would be better off without them—with less tobacco and alcohol and fewer automobile accidents. But since we see the equation from the production side, and automatically deem production as "good," we don't even raise that question. "It is the number of cars and drugs sold that is the measure, not what the auto and drug industries add and subtract from the transportation usage and health of people," Nader writes.

A true consumer economy, in other words, would be measured in terms of consumer well-being, not in terms of the amount of production. It is the production premise itself—and not the consumer movement as Nader defines it—that is really responsible for the commodity fetish that people associate with "consumerism." When the needs of production come first, then producers resort to every strategy and artifice to get us to consume more, even if such consumption is unnecessary or unhealthy. The driving force in the economy becomes getting us to consume more rather than to serve our needs, which might be better served by consuming less. "Enormous skill, artifice, and resources are used in getting consumers to buy what the sellers want to sell notwithstanding the availability of efficient, safe, economical durable and effective alternatives, *including that of buying nothing at all*" (emphasis supplied).

Nonconsumption is not even a tolerated item of public discussion, Nader observes. "Media that live off advertisements urging people *to buy* are not about to give much time to announcements or programs urging people *not to buy*." Enormous waste results. "If in the last 50 years the consumer value had the power to prevail, our nation would be humming along on one-third of the energy." The implications of this production bias are enormous. When production comes first, then more and more of our lives get redefined as new frontiers for consumption. What we now call "leisure," for example, used to be the time when people visited with neighbors, got involved in the PTA or civic association or politics. Now we have a burgeoning "leisure industry" from health spas to dish antennae to fill that time with consumption. "Television alone takes 25 hours a week," Nader noted recently. "And that's consumption." The consumer movement that Nader envisions would put less emphasis on consumption—and on the income necessary to support it. Production would be geared to needs rather than wants. There would be more time for other activities such as civic affairs. "The movement goes to the core of the value system of the society," Nader told a recent interviewer. "It isn't just $200 off the price of a car."

The corner pharmacy

If this is what the consumer movement really means, then let's have more of it. Given the current infatuation with the "supply side," it's especially important to raise questions about the social impact of production. Still, I worry about the gap between the theory and the actuality. Once you've cast the movement in consumer terms, can you ever get it up to the high ground Nader surveys? When Nader starts talking about consumer information banks at shopping centers and "professional consumers" to help people make wise shopping decisions, it really does begin to sound like the gospel of *Consumer Reports*. Cooperative buying efforts like Buyers Up are great ideas. But Nader is the first to acknowledge that history is not encouraging on the possibility of their becoming a movement with larger political goals. For example, at CENEX, the cooperative oil company started in a burst of idealism years ago by the North Dakota Farmer's union, officials speak today like members of the oil industry, not a social movement.

The consumer movement is an important way to mobilize a constituency group to counteract corporate power. But the large corporation does not define the universe of production. The small-scale business in particular can serve a social as well as economic function. I often cringe at the results of consumer price surveys—of drugs, for example. Generally it is the little corner pharmacy that comes out at the bottom. Sure, there are some sharks. But what if the little corner pharmacist is like the one I know who contributes to clean-up campaigns on a declining Main Street and takes a personal interest in his customers, often suggesting that they just go home and get a good night's sleep instead of taking more drugs? He's the bad guy because he can't sell as low as Walgreen's out at the shopping center?

Enterprise *can* be a locus of community values, no less than a buyers coop can be. Worker ownership in particular holds promise in this regard. Nader is wary of worker ownership because there's no guarantee worker-owners will be any more enlightened on consumer issues than absentee shareholders are. A justifiable concern.

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But worker-owners are less likely to want to pollute the community they live in, and are less likely to want to move the plant to Singapore. They can enjoy a healthier connection to their workplace than mere employees. Consumer values aren't the only important ones. We need some way to bring together large amounts of capital, and worker ownership is a more benign way of doing so than the absentee-owned corporation.

Nader has spoken at business schools about the social possibilities of business. He's also spoken about the value of small business. But often he lapses into a Manichean universe in which the consumer is always right and the producer—especially if it is a corporation—always wrong. Combatting corporate self-interest with consumer self-interest is better than not combating it with anything. But at some point, self-interest itself becomes the problem, in whatever form. Yes, you can call the environment a consumer issue because dirty air is a form of "involuntary consumption." But at some point the lines on the graph cross and our self-interest as consumers must take back seat. Not all the social harm comes from the production side.

Chernenkos in the boardroom

If Nader tends in some ways to neglect enterprise, he broadens our horizons regarding what enterprise can be about. When people like Ronald Reagan and Jack Kemp talk about enterprise, it is always in the pecuniary realm, always something we might be bribed to do by a cut in taxes. Nader reminds us that this is not the only possible channel for individual initiative, that citizenship is a form of endeavor calling forth no less the qualities of imagination, persistence, risk-taking, and pluck that are commonly associated with business success. For all the talk about innovation, it is the realm of citizenship, from PTAs to electoral politics, where this quality is most needed.

I've always suspected that one of the things that so unhinges Nader's corporate critics is how much closer his own life is to the rags-to-riches American archetype than are their own. Here's a man who came to Washington with nothing and built an organization and a movement by dint of his own diligence and persistence and who has maintained complete independence of thought and action. Compare that to a James Roche, the GM chairman who had to apologize to Nader for the company's spying on him. Roche had joined GM at age 21 and stayed with the company all his life. Which one was the Andrew Carnegie, the builder and originator, and which one was the Khruschev or Chernenko working his way up the bureaucratic ranks? Nader can even sound like the individualists of the bygone era. "Almost every significant breakthrough," he once told an audience, "has come from the spark, the drive, the initiative of one person. You must believe this."

If consumerism alone is not large enough to define the political movement the country needs, neither is it as large as what Nader really represents. The sin of the Reagan administration has not been in neglecting the consumer so much as in disparaging the concept of public life. To grouse about the inadequate returns of public service, to declare government itself the enemy, is to deny the dignity of working toward public solutions to common problems. When Reagan assures us that we can entrust life's cares to the "invisible hand," what he's really saying is, "Don't bother me, Jack. I don't want to worry about it." It's a way of thinking about economics and life that precludes the need for thinking—let alone commitment and sacrifice—at all.

You can disagree with Nader here and there. But on what really counts—a commitment to making democracy work and a willingness to sacrifice to that end—he is profoundly right.

The best hobby of all

When I return to most of the Nader offices these days, I state my name and business, just like any other visitor. The days of working out of fraternity houses with crumbling plaster ceilings are long past. By design, the Nader network has become an institution; Exxon doesn't go home and the consumer advocates can't either. The groups now operate largely out of modestly comfortable offices at Dupont Circle and on Capitol Hill. The only ones that haven't changed much, despite three moves, are Nader's own.

A fixture now on the Washington scene, it was inevitable that the Nader media presence would fade somewhat. The day we spoke, Nader pointed to a tiny auto recall story on the federal page of *The Washington Post*. "Fifteen years ago that would have been front page news," he said. Then too, the climate today is not what it was in the sixties. At the hearings on GM's snooping, in 1966, Robert Kennedy was able to shame the GM chief by asking him how much the company spent on safety research and how much it made

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in profits. By the late seventies you couldn't shame an American auto executive by asking him about profits. The auto companies had become objects of national solicitude instead.

But when Nader speaks before audiences, as he still frequently does, the response seems indistinguishable from what it was a decade ago. The idealism that isn't supposed to be there any more still is. A senior at Tufts University told the journalist Ken Auletta, "One of the reasons he's important is that he tells me to be idealistic. I'm constantly told, 'Be realistic...don't be a dreamer.' He tells me that's not true, that I can make a difference...." Richard Levick of the Michigan Public Interest Research Group told *Post* reporter Williams, "He's a hero to me. He's the only one in Washington I'd like to be like." At Takoma Park, a young engineer nervously volunteered his services. I thought that I knew just exactly how he felt.

The consumer issues strike a chord as well, at least among the middle class audiences I witnessed. People nod in agreement when Nader raises questions such as why they can't have more say in the insurance policies they buy or the kinds of food that the supermarket carries on its shelves. In the Takoma Park meeting, one man raised his hand to suggest that Nader keep 5 cents of the 25 cent per gallon price differential on the heating fuel to build the Buyers Up idea and extend it to other goods and services. It reinforced a feeling I have had that Nader's star is going to rise again on the national scene. The anger brewing on the telephone rates could almost do it alone. But my hope is that Nader puts more stress on the citizen role—and responsibility—and less exclusively on the consumer, because the latter isn't big enough, and doesn't do justice to what Nader represents.

After a talk in Virginia the week before, also on the subject of Buyers Up, Nader was approached by a little man of the type that always seems to show up at his speeches—a thick European accent, a clutch of papers under his arm, eager to confer on a highly important matter. A female law student broke in, "I just wanted to say, 'Keep it up, Mr. Nader.'" "Oh, don't you worry about that," Nader replied, chuckling, in a way that I found surprisingly reassuring. Nader was asked recently for the three-zillionth time what he did for pleasure. "Trying to make a democracy work better—what could be more pleasurable. And how many countries in the world can you do that in these days." ■

WHO'S WHO in the Administration

You may have thought budget director **David Stockman** was exaggerating when he went before the Senate Budget Committee this month and charged that "institutional forces in the military are more concerned about protecting their retirement benefits than they are about protecting the security of the American people." But when **Ronald Reagan** proposed a military pay freeze back in 1983, **Charles A. Gabriel**, Air Force chief of staff, said he would have preferred to cut weapons....

Liberals and moderates took the appointment of **Patrick J. Buchanan** to the position of White House communications director as a sign of a rightward tilt in the administration. But he won't have all that much policy input. There's potential for real trouble, though, in the new division of responsibilities between the communications director and the press secretary, a position still held by **Larry Speakes**. Speakes used to report to **David Gergan**, a system that led to some bickering. Now both Speakes and the more temperamental Buchanan will report to Regan, who probably won't have the time to coordinate their responsibilities in dealing with the press. The likely result of this effort to soothe Speakes's ego will be that both Speakes and Buchanan will set up independent lines of information to the press, confounding White House efforts at news management....

The **Baker-Regan** job switch raises a question: Who will become the next **Richard Darman**, the man who played such a big role at the White House as **James Baker's** assistant? Our sources say no one. Regan's deputy secretary at Treasury, **R.T. McNamar**, has never been close to him and is rumored to be looking into private sector prospects. Of the few people Regan took to the White House with him, none have Darman's depth of experience or lust for power. We'll probably see a more collegial group of equals functioning together, with **Alfred Kingon**, assistant secretary at Treasury coming over to assume **Craig Fuller's** responsibilities for cabinet relations, **Thomas C. Dawson**, another assistant secretary, handling business and consumer relations, **Christopher Hicks** and **David Chew**, both executive assistants, filling **Margaret Tutwiler's** shoes as all around expediters, and **Richard P. Riley**, special assistant to the secretary, performing the role of valet....Three key members of the White House staff are not in Regan's camp: **Max Friedersdorf**, **Ed Rollins**, and **Larry Speakes**. But Friedersdorf has his own line of communication with the president, and Rollins is a protege of Stuart Spencer, who has

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Reagan's confidence....Memo to **Judy Goldsmith**: **Ann Wrobleski**, who is leaving the East Wing for a job at the State Department, was paid $45,000 to be director of projects. Her successor, **Kenneth L. Barun**, will be paid $60,000....

In

WHITE HOUSE

Assistant to the President and Director of Communications—**Patrick J. Buchanan** has been a syndicated columnist.

Assistant to the President—**Craig L. Fuller** has been assistant to the president for cabinet affairs.

Assistant to the President for Political and Governmental Affairs—**Edward J. Rollins**, has been the White House political director and was director of the Reagan-Bush campaign.

Assistant to the President and Legislative Strategy Coordinator—**Max L. Friedersdorf** has been a vice president of Pepsico Inc.

Cabinet Secretary and Deputy Assistant to the President—**Alfred H. Kingon** has been assistant secretary of the treasury for policy planning and communications.

Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff and Deputy Assistant to the President—**Thomas C. Dawson** has been assistant secretary of the treasury for business and consumer affairs.

Staff Secretary and Deputy Assistant to the President—**David L. Chew** has been senior deputy comptroller of the currency for policy and planning.

Deputy Assistant to the President for Administration—**Christopher Hicks** has been executive assistant to the secretary of the treasury.

Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff—**Richard P. Riley** has been the special assistant to the secretary of the treasury.

JUSTICE

Attorney General—**Edwin Meese III** has been counselor to the president.

Counselor to the Attorney General—**Ronald L. Blunt** has been special assistant to the attorney general.

STATE

Ambassador to the European Economic Community—**J. William Middendorf II** has been the ambassador to the Organization of American States.

Ambassador to the Organization of American States—**Richard T. McCormack** has been assistant secretary of state for economic and business affairs.

Representative to the United Nations—**Vernon Walters** has been a consultant and ambassador-at-large for the State Department.

TREASURY

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Liaison—**Margaret Tutwiler** has been deputy assistant to the president for political affairs.

Assistant Secretary for Administration—**John F.W. Rogers** has been assistant to the president for management and administration and director of the White House office of administration.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Director, ACTION—**Donna M. Alvarado** has been deputy assistant secretary of defense for equal opportunity and safety policy.

Executive Director, Consumer Product Safety Commission—**Leonard DeFiore** has been superintendent of schools for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.

General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission—**Daniel Levinson** has been deputy general counsel of the Office of Personnel Management.

Deputy Postmaster General—**Jackie A. Strange** has been postmaster general for the southern region.

Out

WHITE HOUSE

Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff—**James W. Cicconi** will join the Washington office of the Houston law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld.

AGRICULTURE

Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Inspection Services—**C.W. McMillan** will return to work in Washington as a consultant.

ENERGY

Assistant Secretary for Congressional, Intergovernmental, and Public Affairs and Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, Safety and Environment—**Robert C. Odle Jr.** has resigned to join the law firm of Weil, Gotshal and Manges.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Assistant Secretary for Housing, Federal Housing Commissioner—**Maurice L. Barksdale** has resigned to return to private business and a possible political career in Texas.

INTERIOR

Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks—**G. Ray Arnett** has been named executive vice president of the National Rifle Association.

STATE

U.S. Representative to the United Nations—**Jeane J. Kirkpatrick** is returning to her former post as professor of government at Georgetown University.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Director, ACTION—**Thomas W. Pauken** has resigned to return to Waco, Texas where he is the owner of radio station WCRZ.

Executive Director, Consumer Product Safety Commission—**Edgar Morgan** is returning to the private sector.

Deputy Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration—**Dr. Mark Novitch** has resigned to become vice president of Upjohn Company.

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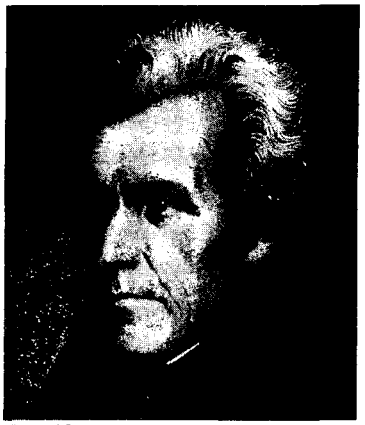
Dept. of the Army

David Levine © 1966 The New York Review



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...whether Douglas MacArthur ever regretted his role in challenging civilian control of the military?

...why *Huckleberry Finn* was banned at the Mark Twain Intermediate School in Fairfax, Virginia, in 1982?

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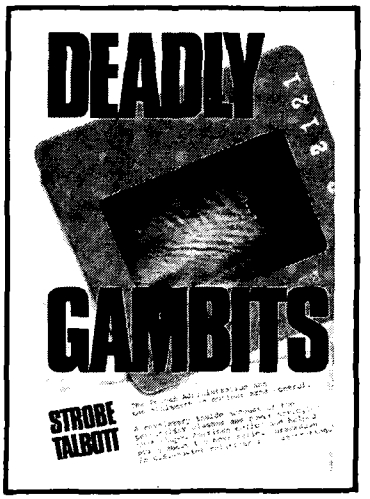
15th Annual Book Award

The Political Book Award for 1985 goes to *Deadly Gambits* by Strobe Talbott. In a review of the book in this magazine Jonathan Alter said:

"With reporting that is superbly detailed, especially considering that many of the principals still hold office,



Talbott shows how arms control policy is formulated at the *third* echelon of government.

Richard Perle reports to Caspar Weinberger, who reports to the president, yet Talbott shows that it's Perle who calls the tune."

Starting on the next page, James Fallows discusses *Deadly Gambits* and Theodore Draper's article on the book in *The New York Times Book Review.*

RUNNERS UP

Brothers and Keepers. John Edgar Wideman. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. (see page 39)

Weapons and Hope. Freeman Dyson. Harper & Row. (see page 32)

Machine Dreams. Jayne Anne Phillips. Dutton. (see page 42)

The Smoke Ring: Tobacco, Money and Multinational Politics. Peter Taylor. Pantheon. (see page 48)

Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age. Benjamin Barber. University of California Press.

The Evolution of Cooperation. Robert Axelrod. Basic Books.

Heading Home. Paul Tsongas. Knopf.

Bloods. Wallace Terry. Random House.

Losing Ground. Charles Murray. Basic Books.

Modern Meat. Orville Schell. Random House.

The Diaries of Mario M. Cuomo. Mario M. Cuomo. Random House.

The Lost Soul of American Politics. John P. Diggins. Basic Books.

The New Politics of Inequality. Thomas Byrne Edsall. Norton.

The Economic Illusion. Robert Kuttner. Houghton Mifflin.

Money and Justice: Who Owns the Courts? Lois G. Forer. Norton.

The New American Poverty. Michael Harrington. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Endless Enemies: The Making of an Unfriendly World. Jonathan Kwitney. Congdon and Weed.

The Reign of Error. Lee Coleman. Beacon Press.

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A History Lesson for the Professors

What they can learn from the best journalists.

Theodore Draper is a distinguished historian who has written many valuable things about international relations and nuclear policy. But he has let himself get carried away with a fuddy-duddy crusade that suggests he does not understand politics as well as he might have seemed to.

The object of Draper's displeasure is *Deadly Gambits**, Strobe Talbott's book about the making of nuclear-weapons policy during the Reagan administration. Draper does not object to the overall argument of the book, but he is sorely vexed by the way Talbott has gone about presenting it. In a long article in *The New York Times Book Review* and a later exchange of responses from Caspar Weinberger, Paul Nitze, and Talbott himself, Draper argued that the worst problem with the book was its unaccountability. Talbott presents long, minutely detailed accounts of who supposedly said what to whom, yet he never tells us how he knows. The result, according to Draper, is "novelistic journalistic history," a bastard form that "runs the risk of becoming unrecognizable as either journalism or history."

I will agree that Talbott could have saved himself a lot of trouble if he had been slightly less aloof about the substantiation for his book. He says in the prologue that the documents on which it is based are classified and the participants will be "constrained from freely discussing their roles" for quite some time. "Therefore," he announces, "I cannot, here or in the pages that follow, acknowledge the sources that allowed me to keep a running account of the events as they unfolded." This is exactly the believe-it-or-else stance that made Talbott's employer, *Time* magazine, seem so graceless in its moment of victory over Ariel Sharon, and there is no reason Talbott should have been lured into it.

Did he have an alternative? Yes. He could have imitated the solution David McClintick devised for *Indecent Exposure*, the book about the Begelman scandals in Hollywood. McClintick was not dealing with classified documents, but he was making revelations that could affect big careers and million-dollar deals, and therefore his sources were at least as eager to camouflage themselves as Talbott's were. Like Talbott, McClintick did not name all the sources; also like Talbott, he presented unattributed, detailed, "novelistic" scenes, complete with vivid dialogue. But in an extended note on sources, McClintick revealed as much as he could about his procedures. He explained how he interviewed people, how he triangulated facts, what degree of confidence he required before he wrote. Of the "novelistic" scenes, he said:

"The author does not claim that the dialogue

James Fallows is Washington editor of The Atlantic *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

*Alfred Knopf, $17.95.

BY JAMES FALLOWS

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represents the exact words used by the characters at the time of the events described. He does assert, however, that the dialogue represents the best recollection of the most accurate interviewees, that it captures the essence and spirit of the conversations that are reconstructed, as well as the personalities and styles of the characters, and that it does so *more* accurately than paraphrase would. Human beings do not speak in paraphrase."

Such a note, perhaps reprinted verbatim from McClintick, would have served Talbott—and his readers—far better than his cursory disclaimer. But to say that Talbott could have explained his operating procedures more fully is not the same as saying what Draper did: that the entire exercise is illegitimate. In fact, the very qualities that Draper scorns in Talbott's book illustrate what makes *Deadly Gambits*—and the genre of "journalistic history" it exemplifies—so valuable.

One of Draper's objections was to the unseemliness of it all—the focus on lower-level figures, and the squabbling and cat-fighting in which these men are constantly engaged. "These participants are not shown engaging in high-minded discussion of the issues," Draper said, implying that this is somehow Talbott's fault. "They are portrayed as cutthroat rivals and shabby intriguers."

It is true that conventional historians pay less attention to squabbling underlings than Talbott does. The most drearily conventional history is written as if the underlings barely exist. Its focus is on the upper tier: Genghis Khan did this, Lord Palmerston did that. In some cases, this approach conceivably might produce an accurate rendering of historical reality. More often, I suspect, historians who rely on it reflect the limits of their imagination and of the available documentation, which naturally emphasizes the man at the top. If there is anything we have come to understand about contemporary history, it is that the people below the top often have more to do with the outcome of events than do their nominal superiors. In part, this is because they usually know more about the specific choices to be made; in part, because an assistant secretary can more easily devote his personal passion to one cause and see it through to completion than his distracted boss can. Recently we had a perfect reminder of why the titular leader is sometimes the worst guide to the events over which he presides. It came from Robert McNamara, who in his deposition for the Westmoreland-CBS trial said he could not imagine that any of his subordinates would have misled him about progress in Vietnam. All the other literature about the war, of course, testifies that deception was built in and endemic from the platoon level on up.

Draper doesn't understand what Talbott does: that the people below the top often have more to do with the outcome of events than do their nominal superiors.

Whether or not concentrating on the middle ranks makes sense as a general proposition, it is indisputably the right focus for any discussion of defense policy in the Reagan administration. The two men at the top—Ronald Reagan and Caspar Weinberger—are renowned for their distance from the details. Therefore, in making figures such as Richard Perle, Richard Burt, and Paul Nitze the centers of his narrative, Talbott came far closer to the truth than any historian 100 years from now would be able to, if the historian were to rely on Reagan's speeches and Weinberger's interviews.

What about the shabby intrigues and cutthroat rivalries that, according to Talbott, preoccupy this group? Draper seems to object to such an emphasis on grounds of its indecorousness; but anyone who has been in the government understands that personal and ideological rivalries (the distinction between the two often disappears) are what make life worth living for many public officials. Again, it is an especially appropriate emphasis in an analysis of the Reagan administration's nuclear policy, since there is so little supervision from above to restrain the genuine disagreements among those below.

In directing our attention to disagreements

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among the assistant secretaries, then, Talbott has done exactly what he should in the service of historical truth. But Draper has a further objection to this presentation: how can the "novelistic" scenes on which it depends for its drama conceivably be true?

Draper can barely conceal his incredulity about the things Talbott presumes to know. "No document is safe from Mr. Talbott" —this apparently meant as criticism. "Mr. Talbott also knows just what was said in the most unlikely places. He takes us into the situation room in the White House. . . . Mr. Talbott is also privy to just what was said at the equally hush-hush National Security Council meetings." How could Talbott possibly know what Paul Nitze and the Soviet negotiator, Yuli Kvitsinsky, said to each other during their "walk in the woods," in a conversation Talbott purports to recreate at length? "Even if we assume that Paul Nitze was the source, could he have reproduced his conversations with Mr. Kvitsinsky so accurately? If Mr. Talbott's informant did not have a listening device with him, he must have been endowed with total recall. It would be interesting to know whether this is one of Mr. Nitze's little-known gifts." Harummph!

Yes, Talbott helped bring this complaint upon himself by failing to provide a McClintick-style disclaimer about the difference between 100 percent, literal, word-for-word, tape-recorder accuracy and 90 percent fidelity to the essence of an event. I am sure that some of the words he places inside quotation marks were not, in fact, uttered in quite the way he asserts. But I also believe that the discrepancies are probably minor, because—contrary to Draper's scoffing—it is entirely plausible that Talbott's sources remembered the things he quotes.

Life consists of different kinds of moments, and during certain kinds nearly everyone is "endowed with total recall." I can't remember what I said an hour ago on the telephone. But I remember exactly what my wife and I said the first time we met, and what my roommates said and did on my first day in college, and what I said and how I felt when our first child was born. And I remember very, very well what occurred—the facial expressions, the pauses between words—during the few times I had a private conversation with a president of the United States.

Even if I'd had an exceptionally weak memory, I could fall back on the cottage industry of note-taking and information-passing that thrives throughout the government. As soon as anyone in an administration returns from a meeting with people equal to or greater than himself in importance, his first mission is to brief his assistants on what was said—or at least note it down for himself. (No one has to bother with these briefings after a meeting with inferiors; it is their business to remember what you are saying, not vice versa.) The notes and briefings may diverge on some details, but not by much. In my experience, it was remarkable how closely the after-action accounts resembled each other.

The colonels-listen-to-generals principle provides a likely solution to a matter that Draper considers a mystery: Draper asked Caspar Weinberger for his response to some of Talbott's allegations. Weinberger flatly denied making two comments Talbott attributed to him and called Talbott a liar. Talbott replied that he had rechecked with his sources and stood by the stories. To Draper, the argument is irresolvable. "The reader has no way of knowing how to find his way through this tangle of alleged errors and lies so long as he does not know who told Mr. Talbott all those unflattering things about Mr. Weinberger." On the contrary, the sociology of government indicates that Talbott is probably correct. One of the remarks in question came at a National Security Council meeting and the other in "private" comments—which usually means musings either with friends at social gatherings or to the loyal subordinates who hang around in hope of hearing such confidences. At any meeting involving Weinberger, except a private one with the president, the other people would be listening to Weinberger more carefully than he would be listening to himself. Weinberger may be wholly sincere in his denial, but I would bet that Talbott is right.

Call me irresponsible

The illustrations Draper picks out as being especially unbelievable are fascinating, because every one of them fits into the category of episodes people *would* remember, precisely because they were dramatic. Paul Nitze has lived a long and event-filled life, but I would imagine that even for him the "walk in the woods" was one of those moments in which he was focusing on every word, absorbing every nuance. And, as he pointed out in a reply to Draper's piece, "with respect to those occasions when we talked without translators, I would write down notes to aid my memory while riding back from the discussions in my car and then dictate as close to a verbatim memorandum of conversation as

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possible." In his reply, Nitze forthrightly endorsed the accuracy of Talbott's account of the walk in the woods; since he is one of two people in the world with firsthand knowledge of the event (he and Kvistsinsky were not surrounded by eager aides listening even more closely than the principals) and has a reputation for probity, his testimony is not easily dismissed. If Talbott's handling of the "walk in the woods" is at all representative, it suggests that he has been as accurate as journalists can be. Indeed, it illustrates why his account may be *more* accurate, truer to the highest ambitions of the historian's craft, than later accounts prepared by historians who try to reconstruct the events from documents could be. Talbott underscored this point in his otherwise deferential reply to Draper:

"The journalistic observer is able to discern what people thought they were doing at the time they were doing it and thus to recognize revisionism and self-serving forgetfulness when, as they often do, they arise later. I've seen enough of the official record of what transpired in SALT II, I.N.F. and START to know that future historians—when they have access to the full record and are in the enviable position of being able to identify sources in footnotes—will still be in some danger of being misled on certain points precisely by that record."

Paul Nitze said, in his reply to Draper, that he was uninterested in questions of procedure; his only interest was in whether Talbott's account was "substantially correct." (Nitze implied that it was.) Draper is very concerned with procedure, and his ultimate challenge is that Talbott's whole idea of using unnamed sources and melding history with journalism is misconceived. His complaint is not that Talbott's attempt was imperfect but that he tried at all.

Unfortunately, the serious part of this complaint is mixed up with some haute-historian disdain for the grubby journalist. (Given current levels of pay and education for national journalists, this is an amusing notion in itself.) Draper cannot help whining about the unfairness of it all: why should Strobe know these things, when no one else, including the historian, does? "Why should the rest of us have to find out what our nonelected officials do and say on matters of incalculable moment and urgency through the medium of a single, nonelected journalist?" The book represents an "ominous collusion between anonymous officials and favored journalists." Well, by whom was Talbott "favored"? Through what agency was he singled out? By a selection committee of administration officials? A peer review panel or tenure committee? Of course not. He was favored by his own efforts and reputation, which allowed him to persuade people who disagreed with him about policy to talk with him over the years. Why should we have to depend on a "single" journalist? Because he was the one who found out. (Draper makes it seem as if Talbott's discoveries should be held against him. Should we blame Seymour Hersh because we had to depend on a single, nonelected journalist to find out about the massacre at My Lai?) Draper has a legitimate complaint against the likes of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, who bulked out their profitable memoirs with secret documents after piously inveighing against national security leaks and forbidding historians to get into their files. But Draper's indignation sounds petulant, as if a tiny foot were being stamped up and down, when directed at Talbott.

Similarly, Draper is peeved that Tom Wicker should refer to the book as "authoritative"—"another wildly misused term for a book which never cites any 'authorities'." Come on, professor, have a heart! Wicker was obviously using the word to mean "having authority," rather than "citing authority." In one of my dictionaries (American Heritage), "having authority" is the second meaning of "authoritative," and in the other (Oxford English Dictionary) it's definition number one. You may disagree with Wicker about the book's merit, but why stoop to making silly debating points?

Debating points aside, should Talbott have written this book at all? To Draper the answer is obviously no, because of the blurring of genres and the unknowable sources. I think that if we want from journalism and history a better understanding of public affairs, the response to Talbott's effort has to be a hearty yes. There are certain kinds of events that "journalistic history" can depict more accurately than either "journalism" or "history," as narrowly conceived. Daily journalists must work so hard on the story immediately at hand that it is hard for them to step back and describe the big picture. More important, those who cover the government are dealing with sources whose personal and institutional welfare may be affected by the story that will appear the next day; it is hard for them to talk about the big picture. Historians, on the other hand, must often approach a subject after its juice has evaporated—when the human beings who participated are dead and all that's left is documents. The craft of history has been enrich-

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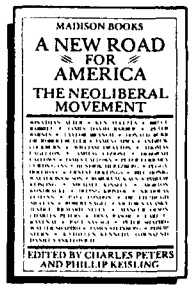
ed by adoption of such "journalistic" techniques as oral histories; and journalism is similarly enriched when it attempts to move beyond the 5 W's and explain recent history, as Strobe Talbott has done. Our ultimate, historical understanding of nuclear policy will be surer, broader, *truer* because of Talbott's efforts. Should not historians be the first to recognize what "journalistic histories" can contribute?

Deadly Gambits is not, as Draper suggests, an utterly unaccountable exercise. Even though Talbott's sources are not available for inspection, one person has made himself accountable for their accuracy. That person is Strobe Talbott. At some point fairly soon, there will be a reality check on his account. His sources will leave the government and start making comments of their own. Other accounts will circulate. Books will be written. There will be denials and rebuttals. Regular historians will get into the act. Four or five years from now, it should be clear whether Talbott was basically telling the truth or not—just as it is now clear that Woodward and Bernstein were basically telling the truth in their unattributed, unaccountable, novelistic, journalistic classic, *All the President's Men*. Talbott runs the same risk of being unmasked that Jack Anderson exposed himself to when he reported before the 1980 election that President Carter was preparing for an invasion of Iran. As soon as the Carter administration was over, its officials made clear, in interviews and memoirs, that Anderson's report was utter fiction.

Part of the reason Talbott's book was called "authoritative" is that he is not a hit-and-run man but someone who has written for years in this field. More to the point, he obviously hopes that he will still have a career as a journalist four or five years from now, when the verdict on his book is in. He would have to be even more reckless than Draper suggests he is not to realize that. He would have to be stupidly short-sighted to risk his reputation on assertions that sooner or later can be shown to be untrue. The truth will not always out—Janet Cooke might never have been exposed had she not won a Pulitzer Prize—but when the people with the power to prove or rebut the story are so prominent, it's hard to sustain a fiction. Just ask Jack Anderson.

Perhaps Strobe Talbott is that reckless and short-sighted. If so, we will know, and he will pay the price. In that case, the indictment of *Deadly Gambits* should be that it failed in its attempt to explain contemporary history—not that it had the effrontery to try. ■

Neolibs vs. Neocons



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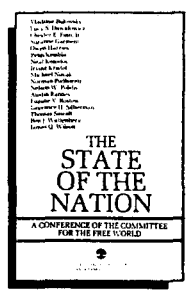

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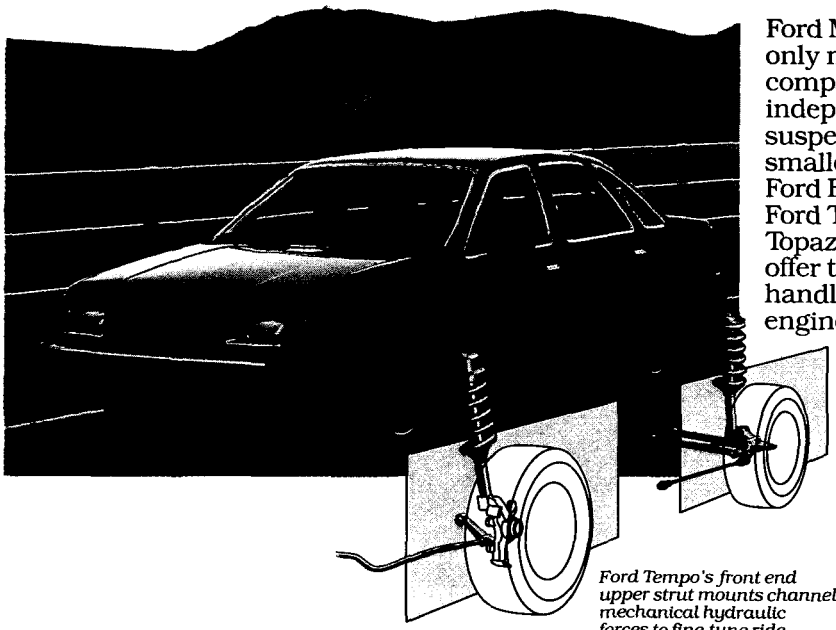

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Why Star Wars Is Not Like the Manhattan Project

I can't be sure, since it hasn't been leaked yet to *Aviation Week,* but I'm afraid our nation faces a major new military threat: the Analogy Gap. I stumbled across this alarming fact while listening to the debate on the Pentagon's "Star Wars" program. Two years have passed since Ronald Reagan proclaimed his dream of a missile defense that would render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete," and still no one has the faintest idea how to build it. You might think this would render the dream impotent. But no, the very absence of a plan seems to be the "Star Wars" advocates' greatest strength. It means they're not bogged down in petty details. They can consider the larger picture. They can ponder history.

When the critics harp about technical impossibilities, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger pooh-poohs all doubts by saying that "there are a lot of things we couldn't do when we first started, including going to the moon." The young physicists working on "Star Wars" reply to skeptical colleagues by citing the atomic bomb. One of them wrote in a letter to the eminent physicist Hans Bethe, "You people who worked on the Manhattan Project had your chance. Let us have our chance, too." When Lt. General James A. Abrahamson was named director of the $26 billion "Star Wars" program—a.k.a. the Strategic Defense Initiative—he didn't waste any time at the press conference discussing how he actually expected to build an impermeable defense against 8,000 warheads. He simply pointed to the space shuttle and said, "We have a nation that can indeed produce miracles."

Now *there's* an impermeable defense. The critics have tried to counterattack—there's been some mumbling about the Maginot Line—but without much luck. Calling it the "Star Wars" program seemed like a clever enough analogy at first, something to link Ronald Reagan with another movie fantasy, but in retrospect it was probably a tactical error. The public, after all, puts a lot of faith in Luke Skywalker. (And he did acquire The Force without any cost overruns.) "Star Wars" just reinforces that successful, futuristic "High Frontier" image that's been so helpful to the advocates of space weapons. The critics need something less glamorous if they want to fight the Pentagon on its own rhetorical terms—and in the absence of any real plans, rhetoric seems almost the only way of debating the "Star Wars" defense. To restore some sane perspective to our military planning, I suggest we close the Analogy Gap. And I can't think of any better way to begin than with Freeman Dyson's new book, *Weapons and Hope.** "History never

John Tierney is a staff writer at Science 85 *magazine.*

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BY JOHN TIERNEY

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repeats itself," he writes, "but it offers wisdom to those who are willing to learn."

Dyson began World War II as a pacifist and ended it planning the brutally ineffective bombing of German civilians. He still finds himself in an awkward middle ground—trying to mediate between what he calls "the warriors" and "the victims." This book, a sequel of sorts to his well-received autobiography, *Disturbing the Universe,* is a rambling meditation on nuclear weapons that somehow manages to reach a cogent and optimistic conclusion. Dyson's argument isn't always convincing, but his hopeful perspective provides a consistently refreshing contrast to the lamentations of Jonathan Schell. With charming erudition and quiet intelligence, Dyson tells personal war stories; he contemplates literature from the *Odyssey* to T.S. Eliot; he chronicles diplomacy since Metternich; he reviews military tactics of Napoleon, Admiral Nelson, and Hitler; and he consistently comes up with a fresh insight, a new analogy.

Best of all, he manages to disagree with everyone. On the question of "Star Wars," for instance, Dyson is a traitor to his class. He's a certified defense intellectual, a physicist at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and a member of the elite Jason group of scientists that meets in secret every year to advise the Pentagon. Yet he rejects a basic assumption shared by most of his academic colleagues: that any defense against missiles is "destabilizing" because it upsets the balance of terror. Dyson sees nothing inherently wrong with building a defense against missiles. But at the same time, he thinks that the "Star Wars" defense—to the vague extent that it exists in people's imaginations—is the latest addition to a list of what he calls "technical follies."

Dyson's first encounter with one of these follies occurred with the Royal Air Force in World War II. To help their bombers, which were being shot down by enemy planes during night runs over Germany, British engineers developed an expensive weapon called the automatic gun-laying turret (AGLT). It was a system that used radar to track a hostile plane at night and then automatically aimed the gun. "All the gunner had to do was wait until the fighter came to an appropriate distance, still beyond visual range, and then pull the trigger," Dyson recalls. "The system was installed in a bomber and tested against pilotless drone targets in trials over England. It worked brilliantly. Drones venturing within half a mile of the bomber were shot down more reliably by the AGLT at night than by the gunner using his eyes to aim the guns in daylight. The problem of the German night fighters was solved."

Bombers with the new guns were coming off the production line when Dyson was called in to help with one last niggling problem. How would a British gunner know that the unseen plane at which he was firing was in fact an enemy? Simple. Each British plane would identify itself. Planes already carried a radio system called IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) to alert friendly gunners. But it was effective only about 90 percent of the time.

Dyson did some calculations. Because bombers flew over in droves, a British pilot was much more likely at any one moment to find himself near another British bomber than a German fighter. Dyson estimated that if a British gunner used his automatic gun to shoot any unseen target that appeared on the radar, the odds were 400 to 1 that he would shoot down a countryman instead of a German. If he relied on an IFF system that was 90 percent effective, then the odds would go down to 40 to 1. The engineers tried desperately to improve the IFF system, but it was a hopeless task. Even if it worked 99 percent of the time, a British gunner would still end up shooting down four British planes for every one German. The system was abandoned, and for the rest of the war gunners fired at planes the old-fashioned way—after seeing the enemy and counting his engines.

"The AGLT itself was such a technical tour de force that nobody expected to be stymied by the comparatively simple job of building a reliable IFF," Dyson writes. "The MX with its ten accurate and independently targetable warheads is likewise a technical tour de force, and its designers did not expect to be stymied by the comparatively simple job of building a base for it." But today, despite the U.S. Air Force's decision to build the MX missile, despite more than 30 schemes (of varying degrees of absurdity) to find an invulnerable base, the MX designers aren't any closer than the British engineers were.

Dyson names three "salient characteristics" of a technical folly: 1) It's incapable of doing the job for which it was designed. 2) It can't be adapted effectively to any other job. 3) It's expensive.

This is a nice enough definition, and certainly fitting for the "Star Wars" program. Space weapons will be horrendously costly, not notably useful for anything except shooting down missiles, and imbued with the same basic flaw as the IFF system in the bombers: even if the system

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works 99 percent of the time, there will still be too many casualties. One percent of the Soviet Union's warheads could devastate every major city in America.

But I don't think Dyson's definition fully accounts for blunders as massive as "Star Wars." Although it's clear to just about everyone that "Star Wars" can't meet its stated goal—rendering nuclear weapons obsolete—it's also clear that just about no one regards this as the real goal of the program. This seems to me characteristic of truly grand technical follies. Besides meeting Dyson's three criteria, any long-lived folly must satisfy one more: its purpose is vague enough to satisfy anyone—and for the wrong reasons.

'Crashes may occur. . . .'

Consider the nuclear airplane. It's a folly mentioned by Dyson, although I wish he had gone into more detail. I suppose my disappointment stems mainly from the fact that I happen to know a lot about this particular fiasco (there are fortunately few of us authorities around), but I also think that the nuclear airplane is an ideal analogy for "Star Wars." The project began in 1946 with a hope as simple and uncontroversial as Ronald Reagan's dream of eliminating nuclear weapons: Wouldn't it be nice if an airplane could stay aloft for weeks at a time?

Alas, no one knew how to build it. In theory it was possible to power an airplane indefinitely with a nuclear reactor. But a crew would have to be protected from the reactor's radiation, and it seemed that any shield would weigh so much that the plane couldn't get off the ground. If the plane ever did fly, what would happen if it crashed? (One critic, Edward Teller, estimated that a crash might release as much radiation as a hydrogen bomb.) How would it be repaired if it had to make an emergency landing? (No one could work near a hot reactor, meaning that mechanics would need special hangars and equipment to service the plane.) And the most important question: What exactly would the plane do to justify all this trouble?

There were no answers, but the Air Force was undeterred. Jealous of the Navy's plans for nuclear submarines (a notion that made sense technically and strategically), it enlisted congressional support and pressured the Atomic Energy Commission to convene a panel of technical experts. They produced a report that noted the obvious problems and contained warnings like, "It is to be expected that crashes may occur, and the site of a crash will be uninhabitable." But speaking from a strictly technical viewpoint, they concluded that "there is a strong probability that some version of nuclear-powered flight can be achieved."

The experts warned that they weren't trying to assess the usefulness of such a plane, but that caveat was ignored. The report was taken as an endorsement. As long as there were no specific, insurmountable obstacles, aviation buffs were ready to proceed. The program was started by some of the same engineers who had just succeeded in developing America's first jets—and who used that analogy for the nuclear flight program. It was the next frontier.

The aviation industry and Congress were delighted with a project that employed 14,000 people in seven different states, including the districts of congressmen sitting on key committees. The Air Force's bomber enthusiasts, worried about competition from ballistic missiles (the pilots used to talk fearfully about becoming the "silent silo-sitters of the Sixties"), saw the manned nuclear airplane as a glamorous alternative (and a way of keeping up with the nuclear Navy, of course). Scientists and engineers were also attracted by the glamour, and even the skeptics among them were glad to accept funding that enabled them to pioneer new reactor designs. "My job was to get better reactors, and I didn't care what label the money had on it," one researcher at the Atomic Energy Commission later explained. "I was willing to take advantage of the Air Force's enthusiasm."

This technical folly lasted 15 years and cost $1 billion. As ballistic missiles and long-range bombers were successfully developed, the need for the plane steadily diminished, yet the project leaders kept coming up with new rationales.

When it looked as if any nuclear plane would be too slow to be of any military use, it was decided to aim for a supersonic plane. Congress reacted by doubling the budget—and then, about a year later, the supersonic goal was quietly abandoned because no one knew how to reach it. Planners next converted their dream plane from a speeding bomber to a lumbering missile carrier that would float above the Russian border, perpetually ready to fire.

Then, after Sputnik, the plane became a matter of national prestige. *Aviation Week* published drawings of a Soviet nuclear plane and asked, "How much longer can we survive as a free nation?" The Soviet plane turned out to be nonexistent, but not before a good deal more

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breastbeating about the nuclear plane gap. And as always, engineers were arguing that no matter what happened to the plane, the project's spinoffs—new materials and designs for planes and nuclear power plants—would pay for themselves.

By 1961, when President Kennedy killed the project, it had produced four large laboratories, several radioactive jet engines, a nine-story hangar, and a 15-meal menu for a five-day nuclear flight that the Air Force drew up after extensively testing volunteers in a mock cabin on the ground. There was still no plane, however. And there were still no solutions to any of the glaring problems that had been identified 15 years earlier.

Peace through analogy

Now consider "Star Wars." It, too, has been pondered by panels of Pentagon-appointed experts, and their conclusions have been about the same as those on the plane: we're optimistic about solving many of the technical problems, but we don't know how useful the results will be. Once again this has been seized as an endorsement by the same constituencies: defense contractors and politicians eager for new jobs to be created, glamour-minded Air Force officers (who always resented NASA invading their turf), scientists who are both excited by a glorious new mission and anxious to get funding for their work in optics, lasers, and particle beams.

I don't blame any of them for relishing the excitement of the challenge. But what's in it for the rest of us? The rationales are already beginning to take shape. Even if the defense is imperfect, say the hard-liners, it will be a vital symbol of our national will. The nuclear theologians—the ones who brought us the "window of vulnerability"—think it will deter the Soviets from a first strike. The people who like to plot careful strategies for limited nuclear wars think of space platforms as just another weapon to be used. Pragmatists suggest that a defense might at least defend us against the attack of a terrorist like Khadafi. The diplomatically minded suggest it will be a "bargaining chip" with the Soviets. *Aviation Week* reports warnings that the Soviets may move ahead in missile defense. Scientists say the program will keep us ahead in vital technologies.

These rationales enable the special-interest groups to proceed on the project without bothering to worry about the original goal of making nuclear weapons obsolete. With their narrow technical concerns, they overlook impracticalities that are as obvious as the nuclear airplane's. Defensive weapons in space would be astoundingly complex yet impossible to test realistically. Their sensitive mirrors and telescopes could be disabled by a single speeding pebble in orbit. They could be avoided by any enemy who decided to launch low-flying missiles or simply carry his warheads into the United States, perhaps inside the bales of marijuana that enter the country daily.

"The purging of nuclear weapons from the earth is too big a job for technology to do alone," Dyson writes. "It is a beautiful dream," he says, referring to "the celestial lightning bolts," but it leads only to "a future of double folly, the small-scale folly of militarily useless weapons, and the large-scale folly of unattainable strategic objectives."

But here Dyson parts company with other critics. He thinks that a modest missile defense in space might be worthwhile if combined with drastic reductions—preferably to zero—of arsenals on Earth. Where others insist that space should remain a peaceful sanctuary, he suggests that weapons might perform a limited service there. He still has faith in peace through technology, and, of course, he has an analogy to explain his optimism.

It is the hydrogen bomb. When J. Robert Oppenheimer and other scientists first contemplated this weapon after World War II, they were appalled. They were convinced that it was far more dangerous than the atomic bomb used on Hiroshima because it could lead to the ultimate nightmare: a single weapon capable of unlimited destruction. It was a question of economics. The ignition system of a hydrogen bomb looked as if it would be expensive to build (because tritium fuel was scarce), but once it was there the bomb's destructive force could be increased very cheaply with readily available deuterium. Oppenheimer reasoned that a country would have only a few of these H-bombs and would therefore make each as powerful as possible. The bombs might get too big to be carried in an airplane, at which point they would have to be carried by sea and detonated offshore, which would mean that they had to be even more powerful—and so it seemed that the logical conclusion would be a "super bomb," with 50,000 times the power of the bomb. It was this vision that inspired the Doomsday Machine in *Doctor Strangelove*, a single weapon that could destroy the entire planet.

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Oppenheimer and his colleagues called on America to avoid this monstrosity. They urged the country to announce that it would not develop an H-bomb, hoping this would inspire similar restraint in the Soviet Union. In the meantime the U.S. could proceed with lots of small A-bombs. President Truman ignored their plea. The hydrogen bomb was developed, and some giant ones were tested.

But the picture soon changed. The final design of the H-bomb didn't require as much tritium as Oppenheimer had feared, so it was cheaper than the first estimates. Meanwhile, accurate missiles were being developed, and they could ultimately be armed with small, separate warheads. Economics and strategy dictated filling the missiles with many small H-bombs instead of a few big ones. Both America and the Soviet Union, after testing huge H-bombs in the 1950s (the record was 2,500 times the Hiroshima blast), have been steadily switching to smaller bombs. These small hydrogen bombs cost about the same—and do about the same amount of damage—as the old-fashioned A-bombs.

The hydrogen bomb has turned out to be neither as evil as Oppenheimer feared nor as necessary as Truman insisted. Since it could easily be replaced by the atomic bomb in today's arsenals, Dyson writes, "the hydrogen bomb has become almost irrelevant."

So the threat of the Doomsday Machine has disappeared not by treaty, not by political action, but by the force of the arms race itself. It became technically obsolete. Dyson hopes that something analagous can happen someday to all offensive nuclear weapons. He hopes that non-nuclear defensive weapons can use sophisticated new sensors and computers to intercept ballistic missiles. They couldn't stop thousands of missiles, but they might help against a few. Once the major task is accomplished—a political agreement to get rid of most of the missiles—a modest array of defensive weapons on the ground and in space could give the superpowers added security against whatever remained. Disarmament would acquire a technical appeal and might therefore seem less utopian.

Dyson calls this defensive scenario "live-and-let-live." As he points out, it is a more moral philosophy than our current doctrine of defense: threatening the Soviet Union with "assured destruction." He rejects the notion that we're inevitably trapped in a suicide pact with our enemies. Going back through literature, he traces the long history of doomsayers in human society—and the equally long history of how humans have somehow survived, of how stories have happy endings. "This lesson, not to give up hope, is the essential lesson for people to learn who are trying to save the world from nuclear destruction." When it comes to political solutions, Dyson is absolutely right: we can't give up hope in our ability to negotiate away nuclear weapons.

When it comes to technical solutions, however, Dyson may be drawing a naively optimistic conclusion from the story of the hydrogen bomb. I find a different lesson in the Oppenheimer analogy. If Truman had listened to Oppenheimer, if America had announced that it would not test a hydrogen bomb unless someone else did, there was at least some chance that the Soviet Union would have refrained also. In that case both countries presumably would have secretly worked on a few prototypes of the H-bomb (so that either country could quickly match the other in case it violated the ban), but the weapons would have remained untested and undeployed. Both countries would instead have built nuclear arsenals entirely of atomic bombs—and, as Dyson points out, these arsenals would not be effectively different than they are today. But the public would have been spared the expense, both financial and psychic, of deploying hydrogen bombs.

Today there's a similarly brief chance to declare a moratorium on testing weapons in space. If the "Star Wars" advocates have their way, an arms race will instead begin up there. It might, as Dyson says, be an arms race that contributes to the obsolescence of offensive weapons. But the Doomsday Machine notwithstanding, the record shows that most technological efforts to stop the arms race have only ended up producing more efficient instruments of destruction.

A modest space defense might be useful, but I can't imagine our military technologists stopping at anything modest. There would be an endless frontier of scenarios to worry about, gaps to close, rationales to consider, promising technologies to test, new Soviet threats to read about in *Aviation Week*. If enthusiasts could keep the nuclear airplane alive for 15 years, they can keep "Star Wars" going as long as the human race survives. When weapons planners become infatuated with high technology, when they start talking about another Manhattan or Apollo project, it's time to keep in mind the message of a group of women who protested recently at the Pentagon. "Take the toys from the boys!" they chanted, and that may be the best analogy of all. ■

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MEMO OF THE MONTH

DEMOCRATIC
NATIONAL COMMITTEE 1625 Massachusetts Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 797-5900

Dorothy Bush
Secretary

December 5, 1984

***TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**
DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE
January 30, 31, and February 1, 1985

All meetings listed below will be held at the Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, 202/234-0700.

Wednesday, January 30, 1985

1:00 p.m.	Credentials Committee
1:00 p.m.	Resolutions Committee
1:00 p.m.	Rules and By-Laws Committee
3:30 p.m.	Executive Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m.	DNC Women's Caucus
7:00 p.m.	Association of State Democratic Chairs

Thursday, January 31, 1985

8:30 a.m.	DNC Regional Caucuses Eastern Midwestern Southern Western
9:00 a.m.	Registration opens (for 1/31 DNC Meeting)
10:00 a.m.	DNC Asian Pacific Caucus
10:00 a.m.	DNC Black Caucus
10:00 a.m.	DNC Business and Professional Caucus
10:00 a.m.	DNC Hispanic Caucus
10:00 a.m.	DNC Lesbian and Gay Caucus
10:00 a.m.	DNC Liberal/Progressive Caucus
11:15 a.m.	Buses depart hotel for Building dedication
12:00 noon	Dedication of new Democratic National Party Headquarters Buses depart Headquarters for hotel
2:30 p.m.	Democratic National Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Reception honoring Democratic Members of Congress (location to be determined)

Friday, February 1, 1985

8:30 a.m.	Registration opens (for 2/1 DNC Meeting)
9:30 a.m.	Democratic National Committee Meeting
following DNC Meeting	Executive Committee Meeting
5:30 p.m.	Reception honoring new National Committee Chair (location to be determined)

***Meeting times are subject to change. A final schedule of meetings will be sent to you.**

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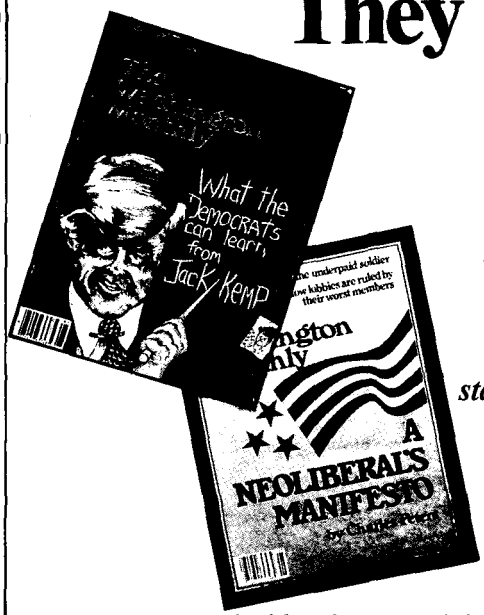

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The Case for Brotherhood

Taking a hard line on crime doesn't mean taking delight in punishment.

When I was in college I spent some time working in an unusual youth counseling program. Each week a friend of mine drove a van full of 12- and 13-year-old black kids, many with juvenile records, to Walpole state prison, one-time home of the Boston Strangler. The inmates would advise the kids about how to straighten out their lives and avoid the "Big House." I was never sure if these visits actually helped our young charges or simply made them able to brag to their friends about knowing big-time crooks. But my own intense conversations with the attention-starved inmates often left me brooding on the ride home.

It wasn't considered polite to ask what they were in for, but the details eventually emerged. Leon, an amiable black inmate with a silver earring who was popular with the kids, told me his life story one day, then began insisting he was not a pimp. Who said you were a pimp, I asked. The prosecutor, he answered, assuming I knew his case. Then, by way of explanation, he said, simply, "I killed Andy Puopolo." Puopolo had been a classmate of mine, a Harvard football player stabbed to death during a scuffle in Boston's notorious Combat Zone. I had trouble talking to Leon after that.

Then there was Jim, a portly white inmate who was very smart and talked about everything in the world except himself. He ran several programs inside the prison and served as a jailhouse lawyer. Like me, Jim loved politics. How could someone who knew that Tom Dewey was called "the man on the wedding cake" have done something that would land him in a maximum security jail for life? As we grew friendlier and his warm, unthreatening personality took hold, the question grew more puzzling.

I mentioned Jim in an article I wrote for my college newspaper about the program, and when the editor saw it he said I must not have been in Massachusetts long enough to recognize the name. A few years earlier Jim had been well known—former treasurer of McGovern's 1972 campaign in Massachusetts, vice president of a local business. One day his boss was found dead, a suicide note on his desk. It turns out Jim poisoned him and faked the note. Then the body of Jim's mother was discovered buried in his basement.

I returned to Walpole, where Jim and I talked some more, but I still couldn't fathom it. Another few visits, no hints. Finally one day I was so determined to get a little closer to his case that I casually dropped the name of the *Boston Globe* reporter who covered his trial. For about a second and a half Jim's eyes narrowed and his voice turned arctic: "I'd like to get that guy out here alone some day." That's all he said before breaking into a grin and cracking a joke, his same old likable self. But that's all it took.

Jim's case may seem like an easy one, but that is only a measure of how far even liberal attitudes

Jonathan Alter is an associate editor of Newsweek *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

BY JONATHAN ALTER

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have traveled in the last couple of years. As recently as 1981, it hadn't been so easy for Norman Mailer and Jack Henry Abbott's parole board to discern the truth. In retrospect, with Abbott's over-praised writing in hand, it should have been simple. On page five of his book, for instance, he writes of a fellow inmate who bugged him for a cigarette: "And I just looked into his sleazy eyes and wanted to kill his ass there in front of God and everyone." Not long after Abbott was freed from jail, when he was bugged by a young waiter at a Greenwich Village restaurant who wouldn't let him use the bathroom, he did what he said he would do on page five.

It is against the tide of Leon and Jim and Jack Henry Abbott that John Edgar Wideman is swimming in *Brothers and Keepers**, a book full of ambiguous emotions on a subject that seems to have lost its ambiguity. Somewhere along the way people stopped caring very much that Leon was good with kids or that Jim could be a friend or that Jack Abbott knew how to write. The crime rate may be down a bit, but the bitterness of the victims has reached a critical mass, even among liberals.

Imagine the liberal outrage that would have occurred ten years ago had a grand jury acquitted a Bernhard Goetz for murder after he shot three black teenagers on the subway, two of them in the back. Now it's William Kunstler against the world. Even black community leaders, while decrying the racist overtones to the Goetz case, have been conspicuously restrained in their defense of the teenagers. After all, it's their own constituents who suffer the most from crime and from an unworkable criminal justice system. Even the old radical chic crowd can't be accused of coddling criminals anymore.

However out of synch with the times, Wideman's musings about his brother are an effort to scramble the new certitude on this issue, not through liberal bromides, but by simply throwing the old-fashioned notion of brotherhood into the mix, tossing all of those dimly recalled ambiguities back into the resisting mind of the reader. He does this by taking the figurative notion of brotherhood—the kind that people used to feel for men in jail—and making it literal brotherhood. This was, of course, a familiar narrative device in those gritty movie melodramas back in the 1930s. Two brothers grow up in the city streets: the older becomes the family's pride and joy, the younger a source of heartbreak and shame. This time the ethnic group struggling to join the middle class isn't the Irish—Pat O'Brien as the priest and Jimmy Cagney as the gangster—but blacks. John is straight A's, basketball scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania, Rhodes Scholar, novelist, and English professor. Robby is class clown, black revolutionary, dopehead, accomplice in an armed robbery attempt on some other petty thieves that results in a murder and puts him in prison for life. Ten years apart in age and living in different cities, "it had taken guards, locks and bars to bring us together."

This is a book about the black male experience at a time when people aren't writing about that, or at least not writing books that are being widely published and read. Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Claude Brown, and Ralph Ellison have largely given way to the Toni Morrisons and Alice Walkers in the task of chronicling black life for the masses. Morrison and Walker are onto a gripping and relevant but entirely different black experience. For reasons that are more taken for granted than explained, violent street crime is an exclusively male activity. If it is not exclusively black, it is enough so that the culture of the ghetto might turn out to be as important to understand as it seemed 15 or 20 years ago, before the bitterness took over. In other words, "Lock 'em up" may be right, but it also may not be enough.

What is required of us? Maybe nothing more than just taking the time to get to know an inmate or two. They are people whose acquaintance self-assured research associates at, say, the Heritage Foundation are not eager to make, even through books. If the Heritage types did take the time, they might in fact find many of their stereotypes confirmed. By most accounts, today's thugs are meaner and more casual about taking a life than ever before. A thousand psychiatrists working overtime could not rationalize their natures or change their behavior. The best we can do is isolate them from the rest of the population, and reconcile ourselves to the fact that they are irredeemable.

But there are others—Wideman would say his brother is among them—who are not the same. There is, after all, a difference between a trigger man and an accomplice; between a first-time car thief and a repeat offender who sticks a knife in your ribs; between the cold-blooded murder of an innocent stranger and the hot-blooded murder of a wife or a friend. The law respects some of those differences. It's the hardliners who sometimes have more trouble making the distinc-

*Holt, Rinehart & Winston, $15.95

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tions. Blinded by their rage, they see all criminals as the same, and the prison as a place to let them rot. Were you crowded three to a cell and homosexually assaulted? You asked for it.

The accomplishment of *Brothers and Keepers* is that it helps us take a second look at these people we've recently come to hate so much. It does so by taking readers into a world that they may have strong opinions about, but don't really know very well. Robby's past is no doubt typical of thousands of other inmates: the difference is that he is insightful enough to explain it, and lucky enough to have a brother who wants to put it between covers.

The outlines of the story are familiar enough. First Robby grows withdrawn and alienated, in this case by the death of a friend whose illness is ignored by white doctors until it's too late. His family moves to a tougher neighborhood and he falls in with a tougher crowd. His mother finds money missing from her purse and later discovers a syringe under his bed. His position as the family's youngest child is a factor; teachers expect him to live up to the performance of his older brothers and sister. The larger problem is, simply, an unquenchable need to be cool. (This last point is so uncool to make that it tends to be underestimated as an explanation of youthful lawbreaking, not to mention many of the rest of the ills of Western civilization.) Here's Robby on that subject, as filtered through his brother's typewriter: "Had this superfly thing. Nobody could tell me nothin'. . . .You out there to show your ass. To let people know you're somebody. Yeah. You out there to shine. To be a star. . . hear the bar go quiet when you walk through the door. See, it's a rep. It's a glamour. . . .The things we liked, we called 'bad'. . . Man, that was a 'bad' girl. The thing was to make up your own rules, do your own thing, but make sure it's contrary to what society says or is. . . ."

The next part of the story is also depressingly familiar. Robby and a couple of friends buy dope in Detroit with the hope of making a killing selling it in Pittsburgh, but the deal goes bad and they need money fast. They take to offering to sell hot TVs to a fence, then robbing the crooked buyers. One such robbery goes awry, and in the confusion Robby's friend shoots and kills a Greek. They flee to the West, visiting John Wideman briefly in Wyoming while on the lam, then are caught and sentenced to life imprisonment. Inside, where recidivism is so high, the saying goes, that the authorities reserve a place for you in the chow line once you get out, Robby becomes a Muslim.

Here the story changes in ways that are confusing for the people with pat answers. Robby, remarkably articulate about where he has gone wrong, buckles down and receives an associate college degree in engineering. Valedictorian of the last prison class before budget cuts eliminate the program, he gives a graduation speech eloquently extolling the virtues of hard work over trying to be hip.

The main reason all of this works is that it is done through John Wideman, who is determined to figure out why he and his brother took different paths. He recounts the stages of his adjustment to leading the double life of an assimilated black. The first reaction, in college, is like that of anyone moving from one class to another: "Coming home was kind of bragging, like the suntans people bring from Hawaii in the middle of the winter."

But the book is not really about those contrasts. There are no quick cuts between sherry at Oxford and paper bag wine in Pittsburgh or extended meditations on marrying a white woman. He relies instead on a pastiche of confused impressions of his brother that somehow make sense. "Some of these guys are bad, very bad. They must be. That's why prisons exist. That's why you shouldn't be here. You're not like these others. You're my brother, you're like me. Different." The point is, you don't have to agree with Wideman that Robby should not be in jail in order to agree that this particular inmate is *wasting* in jail. One can believe that criminals have done harm to us (and should be imprisoned for it), without believing that we should do harm to them (and revel in their misery). Liberals no longer have much trouble facing the first idea, but millions of conservatives will not give the second idea even a thought.

Maybe Jimmy Cagney and Pat O'Brien had it right in those old movies after all. Just before the credits rolled, Cagney or some other scarface would shuffle down the long hallway toward the prison door, head bowed. O'Brien, or whoever happened to be playing the golden-hearted priest, would be weeping softly, but he'd be certain justice could permit no other outcome. That's about where John Edgar Wideman leaves off, though with the hope that the metal door will swing open again before too long. As for me, I can't cry for Leon and Jim any more than the families of their dead victims can. But I do know that the kids we drove out to the prison that year are not the only ones who could learn from them. ■

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Machine Dreams: *Retooling Fiction*

When John Steinbeck published *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1939, the story he was telling was not entirely new; journalists had been writing about the exodus of the Okies and Arkies from the Dustbowl throughout the 1930s, and several articles had already been written about conditions in the migrant labor camps of California. Steinbeck himself had published an article in the *San Francisco News* in 1936 called "The Harvest Gypsies" that provided him with much of the raw material for *The Grapes of Wrath*.

But conveying the basic facts about Dustbowl refugees was not the lasting achievement of the book. "Mr. Steinbeck did not have to create a world for the Joads," wrote a reviewer for *The New York Times* in 1939. "It is there. What he did do is to make you see it and feel it and understand it." Similarly, in Jayne Ann Phillips's new first novel*, the facts that we are given about life in a small West Virginia town over the course of 40 years, from the Depression through the Vietnam war, are not all that revealing. The historical information could easily be gleaned from a survey of old *Life* magazines, or a talk with a sharp old-timer. Like *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Machine Dreams* is important not for the facts it provides about a particular era in history but for its empathy for people who lived through those times and its understanding of how their lives connected to other lives. These are, of course, qualities that we expect all fiction to possess. But little of the fiction produced today manages to communicate this feeling. The reason, I would argue, stems from the inability or unwillingness of most novelists to draw upon the kind of broad understanding of society that has always informed the best literature.

Machine Dreams tells the story of two generations of the Hampson family: Jean and her husband Mitch, their daughter Danner, and their son Billy. During the thirties, Jean endures a girlhood with a father gone alcoholic from Depression misfortune. In the war years, Mitch serves in the South Pacific, out of direct combat but not out of sight of the dead and wounded, who haunt him for years afterward. The war over, Jean and Mitch marry and begin to raise a family. The texture of their lives is exactly what you'd expect: VFW dances, parades, new consumer goods delivered in the postwar prosperity. The details of archetypal small-town life are all here—lights on the front porch, backseat sexual initiations, sidewalk sages and busybodies, doctors named "Reb"—but these are rendered unstereotypically, with a richness that speaks of Phillips's understanding of real life, and not an idea of real life. Against this backdrop, the dissolution of the couple's marriage and the death of the son, Billy,

William McGowan is an editor of The Washington Monthly.

**Machine Dreams*. Jayne Anne Phillips. Dutton, $16.95.

BY WILLIAM MCGOWAN

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in Vietnam, acquire a deeper significance.

"Easy to tell good from evil," reminisces Jean Hampson in describing the moral clarity of the war years. But in the years that follow, the lines are not so clearly drawn; all the old certainties are threatened. You can see it in the contrast between Mitch's war experience and Billy's. Stationed in the Pacific, Mitch writes in a letter home that the thought of his half-sister being able to walk down Main Street fills him with a sense of purpose. Isn't the idea of a Main Street where people exchange talk "a small but human reason" we're in the war in the first place? he asks. In Vietnam, Billy has no such comforting connection to the home front. "I'm with Luke and the crew and we live in the chopper," he writes. "These guys are the only country I know of and they are what I am defending. I'm not stupid enough to think my country is over here."

Like other novels in the mainstream of American fiction today, *Machine Dreams* is about love, death, divorce, and family dissolution. But it differs in one crucial way: its insistence that these things be understood as part of the life of the community. The characters are revealed not only by what is happening to them but also by what is going on around them. Historical events come to bear indirectly on the narrative; for example, a young Hampson cousin develops a lifelong heart murmer due to a wartime penicillin shortage, and long after his own war experience, Mitch listens to the sound of his own heartbeat and hears "the Guinea tides" he heard as a young man. Such narrative devices make *Machine Dreams* something of a "political" novel, although not in the same sense that novels about Washington are political. Instead of exploring politics itself, *Machine Dreams* shows the impact that changes in society have on the lives of its characters.

Fiction like us

Why does such a novel seem so unusual today? Certainly we must recognize Phillips's uncommon skill as a storyteller as part of the reason. But another reason has less to do with the merits of this particular novel than with the general state of American fiction. More and more, American novels seem removed from the ordinary concerns of life that weave various social classes and special interest groups into something we might call a society. Great American novels, whether they depict a broad slice of humanity, like *Huckleberry Finn*, or an elite, like *The House of Mirth*, have always reflected an understanding of the fabric of American life—a sense of how this story fits into the broader pattern of our culture. Today, however, there is a growing tendency for novelists to reveal only the obsessions of one segment of the population—the literary upper middle class. As Earl Shorris put it recently in *The New York Times Book Review*, "We are in danger of creating a national literature of growing up and getting divorced."

More and more American novelists seem removed from the ordinary concerns of life that weave various social classes and special-interest groups together into something we may call a society.

Consider three recent books by up-and-coming novelists depicting life in New York City. There's *Bright Lights, Big City*, a first novel by Jay McInerney, a former fact-checker for *The New Yorker*. McInerney's book has received much acclaim for its satirical depiction of the yuppie subculture. The novel follows his protagonist (also a former fact-checker for *The New Yorker*) entertainingly and accurately enough on a coke-jag through Manhattan's trendiest clubs, but there's little insight along the way into the significance of this world. Then there's Emily Listfield's *It Was Gonna Be Like Paris*, which explores the lives of lower-Manhattan bohemians through an impressionistic collection of diary-like ravings by a New Wave groupie desperately searching for artistic truth and sexual intensity. How such yearnings connect to the rest of us is never made clear. Finally, there's Janet Hobhouse's *Dancing in the Dark*, in which a young corporate wife teams up with a group of Eurofag designer types to seek excitement and fulfillment in downtown discos and boutiques. Hobhouse doesn't even *try* to be satirical in her depiction of this quest.

The problem with these novels is not that they confine themselves to the upper reaches of socie-

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Courtesy of Jim Comstock

The details of small-town life are all here—lights on the front porch, backseat sexual initiations, sidewalk sages and busybodies, doctors named "Reb."

ty; many great novels have explored the manners of the elite. Rather, it is that these books do not seem to be informed by a sense of what lies beyond the immediate settings. One never feels as though there's any life occurring just outside the frame. Without a sense of perspective as to where their characters fit into a broader social context, these writers can never get any critical distance on what they are describing, and can never cut to the quick with any insights about habits or tastes.

This is a problem not only with the younger generation of writers. You can see it also in the work of those who are a few years ahead of the McInerneys and the Listfields. Take John Irving's *The World According to Garp*. The fact that the book portrays the life of a writer who resembles Irving himself shouldn't necessarily be a hindrance; after all, lives that have meaning are being lived in prep schools and college campuses, just as they are in factories and ghettos. But because Irving lacks a true understanding of the world beyond these settings, the only way he knows to introduce a sense of what is happening to American society is through cartoonish depictions of political hysteria—for example, the "Ellen Jamesians, " fanatical feminists who cut out their tongues to demonstrate devotion to their cause, and who ultimately kill Garp. For all its humor and narrative power, no one would ever mistake *The World According to Garp* for a novel that helped us understand American culture.

From cadres to class snobs

One reason that the view of the world we receive from our fiction is so inadequate is that novelists tend to see social concerns as a distraction from the novel's true mission, which is to explore the self. This idea evolved from a serious debate that gripped American intellectuals in the forties, which in turn grew out of broad political, social and cultural changes occurring at the time.

Before 1940, there was a rich tradition of American fiction informed by a broad social awareness. It reached back into the nineteenth century to such writers as Twain and Melville and into the twentieth century with novelists like Dos Passos and Faulkner. But at the beginning of this century, a more narrow form, "social realism," took hold in the works of Theodore Dreiser and James T. Farrell, and during the thirties this form was embraced by the growing ranks of leftist political activists who were radicalized by the Great Depression. Some of these writers joined the Communist Party; many more had intellectual sympathies. As the politics of the genre grew more fervent than the aesthetics, social realism became heavy-handed and lifeless. By the forties writers were turning to modernism, which placed individual consciousness above social consciousness. An earlier generation of European practitioners of the form—writers like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf—became the new literary heroes in America.

A key reason for this change in literary taste was a growing disillusion with the Soviet experiment. As news of the purge trials trickled in, radical politics lost its aura, and with the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact the disillusion was complete for all but the most hardened Communists. Finding both Stalinism and Fascism equally repellent, *Partisan Review*, the premier intellectual journal of the day, called for the replacement of all academic orthodoxies in favor of "unlimited freedom of speculation, the union of free radicalism and modernism," as Alfred Kazin recalls in his memoir of the period, *New York Jew*. This grew into a sweeping condemnation of any "official" culture. "It is a matter of cultural life and death to resist this tendency, regardless of one's specific political beliefs," wrote Dwight MacDonald in *Partisan Review* on the eve of Pearl Harbor.

The end of the war brought calm and equanimity; intellectuals who had been inspired by FDR were embarrassed by Harry Truman, whom they considered a lowbrow. Public life and

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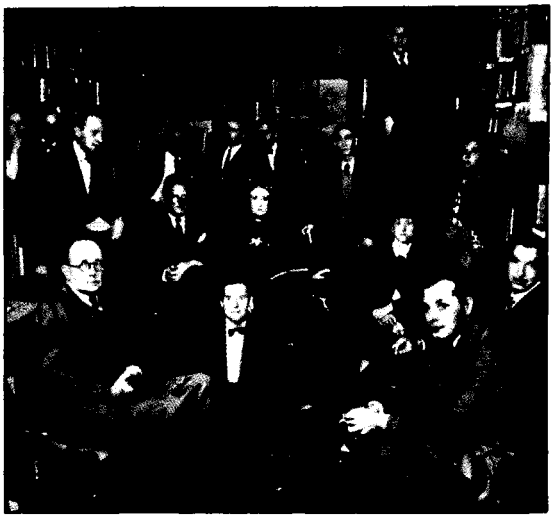
politics gave way to an assortment of leisure pursuits that grew increasingly elaborate—and hierarchical. While the GI Bill, the housing boom, and general prosperity increased upward mobility, anxiety about social status increased along with it, until having the right tastes—a preference for *The New Yorker* over *Life* magazine, for foreign over domestic cars, and, most significant for fiction, for modernism over clumsy "message" novels like *Gentlemen's Agreement* and *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*—became more important than money in determining social status at the upper levels. The most gifted writers of fiction, trembling at the thought of being branded "middlebrow," were quickly caught up in the game themselves, and lost a sense of the broad panorama.

Why didn't proletarian writers keep the tradition of social realism alive while the bards of the upper-middle class—from John Updike to Irving to McInerney—pandered to elite self-absorption? The answer is that, as much as we'd like to think creative genius has just as great a chance surfacing in the lower classes as it does in the upper, this is largely a delusion. Artistic and literary genius happens, in the main, in the class which can afford to pursue it: that is, the upper middle class. But this social class lives in a social vacuum. The civic institutions that once brought together people from different stations in life—public schools, the military—increasingly fail to do that. Neighborhoods are precisely indexed to income levels, robbing them of social diversity. Our community life has grown more undemocratic; why should our fiction—the mirror of that life—be any different?

It takes a very strong sense of rootedness to one place, an understanding of its history and social fabric, to develop the kind of imaginative reach that the best novelists give us. But people maturing in the postwar period have suffered more disjunction and mobility in their lives than any other previous generation. Increasingly throughout the fifties and sixties, corporations developed employee transfer policies that relocated rising executives every three years or so (mainly to keep them from establishing power bases from which to challenge the organization). This created a class of upper-middle-class people now in their twenties and thirties who never stayed in one place long enough to develop a feeling for community life. At the same time, divorce became endemic, splintering the sense of family—both immediate and extended—and the family legends so vital to a writer's sense of himself and the culture at large. With family and community life so disrupted, it followed that the writer would feel a sense of disconnection, and that appreciation for the social diversity of the country would be stunted.



Courtesy of Frances Steloff

The post-war literary generation assembles at the Gotham Book Mart to honor the Sitwells.

Another factor that eroded a sense for the broad community in our literature was the increasingly large role that universities came to play in the care and feeding of novelists. The academic cloister, in which more and more writers find themselves as a function of simple economic survival, has a great influence on what is thought and what is written. While it is laudable that university-sponsored writer-in-residence positions and tenured faculty appointments are keeping writers from starving in garrets or quitting altogether, the university may be doing more harm to literature than good. A recent article in *Esquire* explained how university writing program directors and visiting writers holding temporary teaching jobs have become the lead scouts in the search for rising literary talent. Meanwhile, through increasingly influential university presses, the universities have also taken over a large role in deciding who gets published. Not surprisingly, a high proportion of the novelists end up being academic writers (although to avoid a conflict of interest, universities may refrain from publishing members of their own faculties). Finally, it is the universities that produce the reviewers (or, broadly speaking, set the standards for non-academic reviewers) who evaluate the

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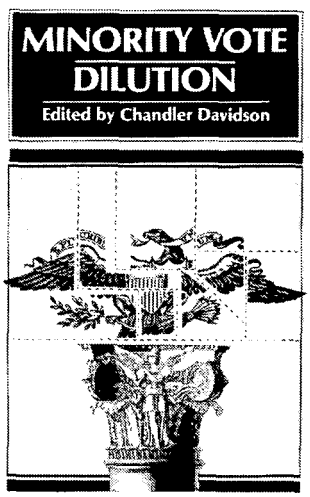
books that get published. As *Esquire* summed it up: "The colleges and universities now—first by finding writers, then supporting them, and now by beginning to publish them, as well as making the ultimate judgment on them—seem just about ready to take over the entire business of publishing itself." The only thing left out of this process is a public to *read* these novels.

The worst thing about the rise of university writing programs and tenured professorships of creative writing is that it has brought credentialism into a field that had always been unusually free of it. The MFA in creative writing has become the MBA of the literary world; without it it's rare that someone will be able to break into the small circle of writers who can actually get their fiction published. Small wonder, then, that much fiction writing today seems the product of a professionalized class, with that class's own hierarchies and biases coloring its view of life. In a recent review of *Intro 13*, an anthology of writing from college writing programs around the country, the novelist Jaimy Gordon noted a striking preponderance of stories involving blue collar milieus—but found most of them unconvincing.

"... provides an education in fundamental voting rights and the distribution of political power in America today."
The New York Times Book Review

HOWARD



Howard University Press, 2900 Van Ness Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

As the university fiction factory has expanded its role in publishing, the notion that writers really work from intuition and imagination rather than from experience has gained currency in certain literary quarters. A true creative genius, it is argued, doesn't have to lead the old stereotypical "writerly" life in order to write about the world convincingly. He doesn't have to be the knockaround guy it was imagined he had to be—the bartender, the sailer, the ditchdigger, the rider of rails. The decline of this romantic notion, I would argue, has hurt fiction. To be sure, the old Hemingway ideal of running with the bulls in Pamplona had its ludicrous side. But surely *some* breadth of experience is required before one can write a novel that will express anything meaningful about life.

Danny Santiago's 1983 novel, *Famous All Over Town*, was presumed to be the work of a talented young Hispanic novelist from East Los Angeles. Then Danny Santiago was revealed to be Dan James, a 73-year-old WASP social activist who had been a classical Greek major at Yale. James spent nearly 35 years in the ghetto as a social worker and spent nearly 15 years crafting one of the most convincing novels ever written about Hispanic America. You'd think the literary world would have heaped praise on the author when it was revealed that he was an Anglo. But the critics chose instead to brood about the fraud that had been perpetuated on the public and to reevaluate the novel's "authenticity."

What's most baffling about the unwillingness of writers to take in the big picture is that Americans are hungry for this kind of writing. The enormous popularity of James Michener shows how much Americans crave fiction that provides some social and historical perspective, in this case quite explicit, for its characters. Unfortunately, while the Micheners make a lot of money, they do not make a great amount of art. Novelists like Phillips and James are among the few who recognize that an understanding of the broad fabric of society not only serves the muse but may also provide a way to reach beyond the tiny audience that now exists for "good" fiction.

Encouraging more novels like *Machine Dreams* is not a call for social tracts outfitted with the kind of cardboard characters that brought realism into such artistic disrepute with the *Partisan Review* crowd back in the forties. It is simply a matter of asking novelists to pick their heads out of the sand. We need more fiction that can show us how individual experience connects to the larger life of society. ■

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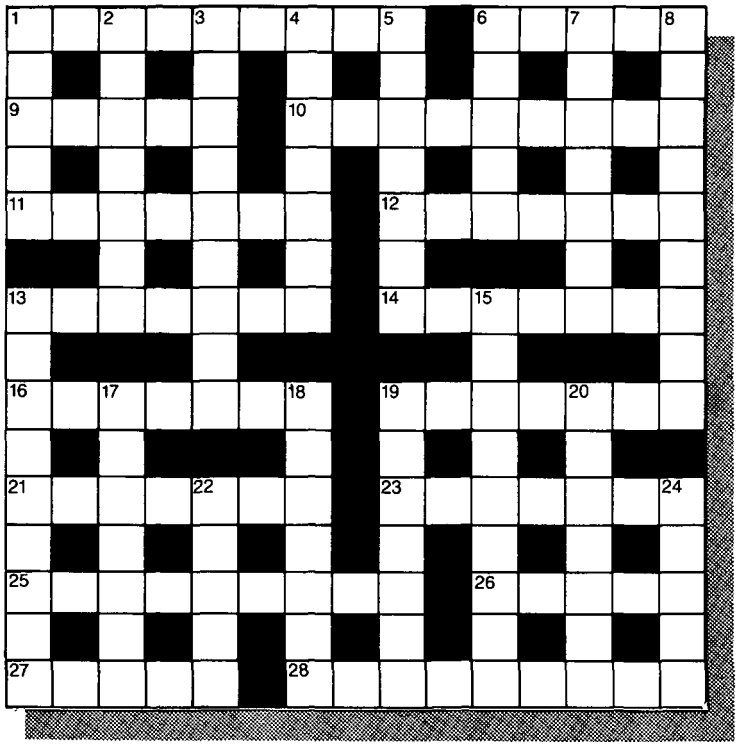
POLITICAL PUZZLE

by John Barclay

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2, 3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word.



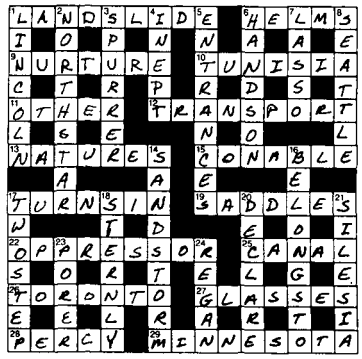
ACROSS

1. International negotiations for limb stems? (4,5)
5. Cracks at the bargaining table. (5)
9. Roles played by unsuccessful candidate. (5)
10. Make a third more for revolutionary month. (9)
11. Pursuit of four in trial. (7)
12. Keep up blemish around this country. (7)
13. Service station signs are rife, surprisingly. (4, 3)
14. Strange, strange bold lad. (7)
16. Four years generated ten more. (3, 4)
19. Workshop constructed clumsily, *i.e.*, later. (7)
21. Moved in and led after strange test. (7)
23. Injury is par for the course? (7)
25. Girl puts on a little weight before Roger's first emcee. (9)
26. Mistake in ferro-rubidium alloy. (5)
27. End of war is part we hear. (5)
28. Eponymous patriot for 2 Down. (9)

DOWN

1. Give out ballot finally. (5)
2. Elaborate similes subject of 1 Across. (7)
3. Stop and meet train somehow. (9)
4. Golfer falling short? (7)
5. Toe mess gives an impression. (5, 2)
6. Walter and David, for example. (5)
7. State of popular princess. (7)
8. Alien about 50 is murderer. (9)
13. Most of pad arranged for benefit of needy. (4, 5)
15. Most boring when moving air rested. (9)
17. Russian territory wrong way to Sienna. (7)
18. English mother takes in a kind of poetry a little bit. (7)
19. Jolson's Algerian city or 9 Across. (4-3)
20. Unusual merit in the meantime. (7)
22. Excellent soul backs cad. (5)
24. Rhone-based flier. (5)

Answers to January puzzle:



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The Cigarette Companies: How They Get Away With Murder, Part II

Cigarettes haven't gotten less deadly. The companies that make them have gotten better at silencing the press.

Three thousand Americans died of lung cancer in 1930. Today the disease kills that many every nine days. The reason for the increase is smoking. Cigarettes didn't begin to catch on in a big way until after World War I, and lung cancer has an incubation period of 20 to 30 years. In the United States, smoking now causes 85 percent of lung cancer cases, 30 percent of all cancer cases, and a total of 350,000 premature deaths every year, including deaths from emphysema, bronchitis, pneumonia, and heart disease (but not including 2,000 deaths from house fires caused by careless smoking or as many as 5,000 deaths among nonsmokers who breathe in smoke that others exhale). Smoking, in the words of the surgeon general, is the "chief single avoidable cause of death in our society." (See "The Cigarette Makers: How They Get Away With Murder," Ken Cummins, April 1984.)

Not so, claims the tobacco industry. For more than 20 years, in the face of overwhelming proof to the contrary, cigarette manufacturers have maintained that the link between smoking and "various health conditions and outcomes" (as an industry spokesman I interviewed recently referred to cancer and death) is entirely conjectural. If nothing else, the industry's claim is remarkable for its bravado. Creationists maintain an equally implausible position, but they can at least point to the Bible; cigarette companies can cite no authority higher than their own propagandists and a shrinking handful of medical flat-earth men.

Despite this, the cigarette industry's 20-year war on medical fact has been remarkably successful. American tobacco companies sold 593.6 billion cigarettes in 1983, down slightly from the year before but up 20 percent from 1964, the year of the surgeon general's original report. When the dangers of smoking were first publicized, tobacco companies frantically diversified in hopes of offsetting the expected disintegration of their earnings. But America's cigarette addiction was stronger than the companies had dared to hope (48 percent of lung cancer victims who survive surgery begin smoking again, most within a year), and they were able to change their strategy. In 1981 R.J. Reynolds (Winston, Camel) bought $215 million worth of new cigarette-packing equipment and began a ten-year, $1 billion construction project at its main cigarette plant in North Carolina. Philip Morris (Marlboro, Merit), meanwhile, negotiated a $350 million merger with Rothmans International, the British cigarette giant, and undertook a $25 million plant expansion. In recent months, Reynolds has divested itself of three major non-tobacco subsidiaries.

The lung cancer industry's surprising health

David Owen is a New York writer. His book, None of the Above: Behind the Myth of Scholastic Aptitude, *will be published by Houghton Mifflin in May.*

BY DAVID OWEN

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demonstrates the power of the unrelenting lie. Truth is no match for deceit that gives no quarter. Smoking causes cancer? "No conclusive medical or clinical proof has been discovered," deadpans Philip Morris. Plenty of proof *has* been discovered? "We are medically unqualified to comment or make judgments," says the chairman of the British tobacco lobby. Why don't you ask someone who *is* qualified? "Rothmans never comments on opinions expressed by members of the medical profession." There's a dark genius to this tactic. By calmly, steadfastly refusing to acknowledge that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, the tobacco industry makes its critics seem shrill and hysterical and provides smokers with the morsel of doubt they need to rationalize continuing to consume. The transcendent achievement of the cigarette lobby has been to establish the cancer issue as a "controversy" or a "debate" rather than as the clear-cut scientific case that it is.

The tobacco industry maintains this deception with the aid of an enormous global network. Governments support cigarettes (and even subsidize their production) in order to reap the tax and export revenues they generate; politicians smile on the cigarette industry in return for the right to keep their hands in the deep pockets of the tobacco lobby; magazines and newspapers look the other way rather than lose their major advertisers; and of course smokers themselves keep the whole enterprise going by continuing to squander their money and their health.

Peter Taylor calls this vast and convoluted network the Smoke Ring. His book* is an examination of "why governments place wealth before health" and of "the political and economic mechanisms of the power of tobacco." Taylor has experienced these processes first-hand. He is a British television correspondent whose credits include "Death in the West," a powerful documentary that juxtaposes Marlboro commercials with footage of real-life American cowboys dying of lung cancer and emphysema. The film also contains an interview with a Dr. Helmut Wakeham, vice president for "science and technology" at Philip Morris. Wakeham is asked whether cigarettes are harmful. "Anything can be considered harmful," he replies. "Applesauce is harmful if you get too much of it." Interviewer: "I don't think many people are dying from applesauce." Wakeham: "They're not eating that much."

**The Smoke Ring: Tobacco, Money, and Multinational Politics.* Pantheon, $18.95.

After "Death in the West" was broadcast in England in 1976, Philip Morris went to court to keep it from being shown in the United States. Thames Television capitulated and, in a bizarre out-of-court settlement, promised never to broadcast the film again, to turn over all but one file copy to Philip Morris, and not to reveal the terms of the settlement. It was not until 1982 that a bootleg tape of the film finally surfaced in the United States. "Death in the West" is now widely available and has been shown many times on television and in schools.

Admirers of Taylor's film are bound to find his book disappointing. Too much emphasis is placed on insignificant legislation, and too many of Taylor's sources on the sordid politics of the industry are peripheral. Still, given the nearly universal reluctance of newspaper and magazine publishers to offend the advertisers who are killing their subscribers, one takes one's tobacco reading where one finds it. The capitulation of publications as big as *Time* and as small as *The New Republic* guarantees we'll have much to learn from even an inadequate book about smoking.

Smoke and mirrors

"I am convinced by the medical evidence and the unanimous verdict of the world's leading medical authorities that cigarettes disable and kill," Taylor writes in his preface; "but I also recognize that they bring economic benefits which, in purely financial terms, outweigh the cost of human suffering." Everyone has heard sentiments like this before. Health aside, he claims smoking is healthy for the economy. Is this correct?

According to a pamphlet published by the Tobacco Institute, the industry's lobbying juggernaut, tobacco employs 393,000 Americans directly and 1.6 million indirectly ("such as matchbook makers and packaging suppliers, even flavoring formulators and public opinion surveyors"), for a total contribution to the work force of two million jobs. If tobacco disappeared tomorrow, therefore, we would lose "2.5 percent of America's private sector labor force." According to an advertisement paid for by something called the Tobacco Industry Labor/Management Committee that has appeared in a number of magazines, these jobs are now "threatened. . . by well-meaning people who haven't stopped to consider" how their concern about smoking upsets "our brothers and sisters" in the tobacco industry, who, among other things, "marched in the

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This article was originally commissioned by* The New Republic, *but Martin Peretz, the magazine's owner and editor-in-chief, killed it after it had been set in type. What was the basis for this decision? 'Massive losses of advertising revenue,' said Leon Wieseltier, the editor who had assigned it. Peretz told me that he thought smoking was not as dangerous as doctors made it out to be and that, therefore, 'this is a costly crusade that I am willing to forgo.'

Nation's Capital to support health care for the elderly." Can we possibly afford to warn school children about the dangers of cigarettes when so many benefits are at stake?

But the industry's specious "cost-benefit analysis" looks at only part of the equation. After all, smoking kills 350,000 Americans each year, just 43,000 fewer than it employs. As the tobacco industry likes to say, "weigh both sides before you take sides."

Another part of the equation is the jobs the Tobacco Institute didn't think to include on its list. Smoking indirectly provides livelihoods not only for "flavoring formulators and opinion surveyors" but also thoracic surgeons, funeral directors, florists, grave diggers, street sweepers, firemen, magazine editors, and a substantial fraction of the membership of both houses of Congress.

Smoking, it must be admitted, does generate enormous tax revenues. According to the Institute, tobacco is responsible for about $4.4 billion in federal taxes and $4.3 billion in state taxes each year (including, ludicrously, Social Security and personal income taxes paid by industry employees; would they stop paying taxes if they worked for someone else?). The industry also exports more tobacco and tobacco products than it imports, giving it an annual trade surplus of $1.7 billion.

But these benefits, large though they may be, don't begin to make up for tobacco's huge drain on public and private resources. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, smoking annually costs Americans $13 billion in medical bills, $25 billion in lost productivity, and $3.8 billion for Medicaid and Medicare. For nearly half a century, the federal government has subsidized tobacco growers through "commodity loans" that set a minimum market price for tobacco. Jesse Helms likes to claim that this welfare program pays for itself, but it has actually cost taxpayers $700 million in lost principal and interest alone. The program costs further millions each year to administer. The Department of Agriculture spends even more millions on research aimed at finding cheaper ways to grow tobacco, providing a free boost to the cigarette industry and effectively nullifying the surgeon general's efforts to discourage smoking. As Taylor would have discovered if he had looked a little deeper, the cigarette industry's arithmetic is highly deceptive.

The industry's deceptions don't end with arithmetic. "Do cigarette companies want kids to smoke?" asks an advertisement paid for by the Tobacco Institute. The answer, according to the ad, is "No!" A photograph shows a kid's dresser drawer with a pack of cigarettes tucked in among some gym shorts and a scuffed-up baseball. "All of us need a time of 'growing up' to develop the mature judgment to do so many things," the text continues. "Like driving. Voting. Raising a family. . . . In our view, smoking is an adult custom and the decision to smoke should be based on mature and informed individual freedom of choice."

This is baloney. Kids who smoke are the lifeblood of the tobacco industry. "Smoking is a habit that begins in the young," a spokesman for the American Cancer Society told me, "and it is the young smoker who becomes the confirmed adult smoker. People who pick up this habit in their early twenties do not become confirmed smokers. It's the smoker who begins at the age of 11 and 12 who becomes the one-, two-, three-pack-a-day smoker in his twenties, thirties, and forties. If you're selling a product that requires frequent, continuous, and heavy usage, as a cigarette does, then you obviously have to keep in mind that unless you get the teenager to smoke, you really don't have a consumer out there." Indeed, 75 percent of all smokers are hooked before the age of 21. A report commissioned by the Tobacco Institute in 1978 documented the industry's cloudy outlook but identified as a "silver lining" the fact that "the percentage of smokers in the 17-24-year-old age group is up and the amount smoked per day per young smoker is also

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up." (More kids are also now using chewing tobacco. See sidebar below.)

In 1975 Brown & Williamson (Kool, Raleigh) paid for a marketing study that suggested strategies for persuading "young starters" to smoke Viceroys, a popular high-tar brand. "Present the cigarette as one of a few initiations into the adult world," the study suggested. "In your ads create a situation taken from the day-to-day life of the young smoker but in an elegant manner have this situation touch on the basic symbols of the growing-up, maturing process.... *Don't* communicate health or health-related points." Brown & Williamson denies that it ever made use of this advice, but virtually all cigarette advertising is based on it. Even the Tobacco Institute's ad follows it precisely: "Driving. Voting. Raising a family." By arguing that smoking isn't kid stuff, the Institute deviously reinforces the same "initiation" image that the Brown & Williamson study recommended.

In 1964, in response to public criticism, the tobacco industry adopted nine "advertising principles" relating to young people: "No advertising shall appear in publications directed primarily to those under 21 years of age....No one depicted in cigarette advertising shall be or appear to be under 25 years of age....Cigarette advertising shall not suggest that smoking is essential to social prominence, distinction, success or sexual attraction....Cigarette advertising shall not...show any smoker participating in, or obviously just having participated in, a physical activity requiring stamina or athletic conditioning beyond that of normal recreation."

"All companies continue to observe the principles of this code," says the Tobacco Institute. But in fact all violate them flagrantly as a matter of course. *Rolling Stone* and *National Lampoon*, two publications aimed directly at young people, have a much higher density of cigarette ads than most magazines aimed at adults. That 14-year-old models aren't used in those ads is irrelevant; eighth-graders don't smoke cigarettes in order to look like eighth-graders.

"Social prominence, distinction, success, and

Son of the Marlboro Man

If you think tobacco ads have been banned from television and radio, you're wrong. Cigarettes were banished from the airwaves back in 1971, but chewing tobacco was left untouched. The result: the billion-dollar chewing tobacco industry is running TV and radio ads strikingly similar to the old cigarette spots.

"Just a pinch between your cheek and gum and you'll enjoy that pure tobacco flavor," says Walt Garrison, an ex-football player turned rodeo star, in a commercial that is obviously derivative of the Marlboro-man pitch. The sponsoring company, U.S. Tobacco, also runs TV ads in which its four brands of fine-cut Kentucky "moist snuff" chewing tobaccos (Copenhagen, Skoal, Skoal Bandits, and Happy Days) are promoted by football and baseball stars and other celebrities. ("Gives me real tobacco pleasure without lighting up anytime, anywhere," says country-rocker Charlie Daniels in one.) The ads, which have run during football games and the Olympics, promote the idea that snuff dipping is clean, healthy, and consistent with a lifestyle of rugged individualism.

It's true that snuff dipping isn't nearly as lethal as smoking cigarettes: you avoid the tars and carbon monoxide that smokers inhale when you chew. Nevertheless, the Surgeon General has determined that it poses a cancer threat. Numerous authorities have linked long-term use of moist snuff to mouth cancer, yet there are no labels on the product to warn consumers of this danger. At the very least, you'd think we'd want to avoid encouraging teenagers to take up the habit, but TV ads for chewing tobacco do just the opposite.

It was the teenage audience, of course, that most worried critics of cigarette commercials back in the sixties. Now that audience has been bequeathed to the manufacturers of chewing tobacco. Between 1972 and 1984, U.S. Tobacco's TV advertising budget jumped from $800,000 to $4.6 million. The investment paid off: in 1971 the company sold 13,275 pounds of moist snuff; by 1983 that number had jumped to 31,300 pounds. A lot of those who are buying it are adolescents. One study conducted in Oregon high schools found that 23 percent of all tenth graders "dipped" snuff regularly—a greater percentage than those who smoked cigarettes. Another study, conducted in Louisiana, found that 30 percent of the 14- and 15-year-olds surveyed were regular snuff-dippers. Compared with a similar survey done five years earlier, this represents a three- to six-fold increase in the use of snuff. Louis F. Bantly, chairman and president of U.S. Tobacco, has quipped, "In Texas today, a kid wouldn't dare go to school, even if he doesn't use the product, without a can [of snuff] in his Levi's."

—*James Rosenthal*

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sexual attraction," far from being proscribed, are virtually the *only* themes of tobacco advertising. One Lorillard ad shows a shirtless athlete in a locker room toweling himself off and enjoying a Kent after "obviously just having participated in" a game of tennis. In some versions of the ad, you can see his racket. (When I asked Lorillard's vice president for public relations whether this ad violated the industry's principles, she told me, "In our opinion it does not. It shows a confident, mature adult choosing to smoke Kent. He just happens to be in a locker room.") Recent ads for Camel and Winston (R. J. Reynolds) show men climbing mountains, a sport that, because of the altitude, would make most smokers dizzy. (At summer camp in Colorado many years ago, my tent mates and I used to smoke cigarettes on mountains *in order* to get dizzy.)

Magazine publishers know that cigarette companies don't pay attention to their "principles." Publications that depend on cigarette advertising bend over backward to be accommodating. *Mademoiselle* "used editorial ploys to de-emphasize smoking, gave misinformation, and excluded smoking from mention on relevant health topics altogether," according to a 1982 study by the American Council on Science and Health. In *Ms.*, a publication otherwise attentive to women's health, the Council found "a complete absence of articles on the hazards of smoking," even on the danger of smoking during pregnancy or while taking birth control pills.

The October 8, 1984 issues of *Time* contained an 18-page advertising supplement called "Lifestyle/Healthstyle: Strategies for a Healthier, Happier and Longer Life." According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, which *Time* identified as the source of the health advice in the supplement, the original version of the text contained "many strong statements" about the dangers of smoking. All were deleted by *Time*. As Elizabeth M. Whelan pointed out in *The Wall Street Journal*, the text made no mention of smoking except in a brief "lifestyle" quiz, which awarded two points to readers who were "almost always" careful not to smoke in bed and implied (incorrectly) that smoking only low-tar cigarettes, or fewer than ten high-tar cigarettes a day, is not unhealthy. The section's introduction noted "a rise in the incidence of cancer" but attributed this increase to "the chemicals we are exposed to in our foods, water, and the air we breathe" rather than to its principal cause, cigarettes.

When I asked Brian Brown, the magazine's publicity manager, about these deletions, he more or less admitted that they had been made to please the cigarette companies. "*Time*, as does *Newsweek*, has a lot of cigarette advertising," he said; "do you carry material that's insulting to the advertiser?" The Academy sent a letter to the editor protesting the cuts, which it says were made without its approval, but the letter was never published. (*Time*'s letters section "is a forum for editorial response, not response to ads," according to Brown.)

Brown assured me that *Time*'s policy of editing copy to suit the tobacco industry applied only to advertisements. "It would be a completely different story if this were editorial material," he said, claiming that *Time* had published "countless" stories about the dangers of smoking. When I laughed at this, he said, "Okay, 'countless' is an exaggeration." In fact, *Time* almost never runs stories about the dangers of cigarettes. In its 1982 survey, the American Council on Science and Health concluded that articles on smoking in *Time* "were few and, when present, almost encouraged the smoking habit." *Time*'s fear of the tobacco industry is so great that the magazine deletes references to the nation's "chief single avoidable cause of death" even from advertisements paid for by other people. The *Columbia Journalism Review* studied *Time* and other publications and concluded that the tobacco industry "can indeed silence the editors of American magazines."

This article was originally commissioned by *The New Republic*, but Martin Peretz, the magazine's owner and editor-in-chief, killed it after it had been set in type. What was the basis for this decision? "Massive losses of advertising revenue," said Leon Wieseltier, the editor who had assigned it. Peretz told me that he thought smoking was not as dangerous as doctors made it out to be and that, therefore, "this is a costly crusade that I am willing to forgo." Although he wouldn't admit it to me, Peretz spiked the article after showing it to his publisher, Jeffrey L. Dearth, and his former publisher, James K. Glassman, now executive vice president of *U.S. News and World Report* and president of *The Atlantic*, and asking them if he should run it. "This is not our finest hour," Wieseltier said later. "Whereas in this case I think it's true that we buckled before an advertiser, I wouldn't make that a general rule about the magazine. The reason the cigarette companies have such a grip on us is because of the relative size of the account."

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New markets

In most other countries, American tobacco companies don't pretend to adhere to "principles." In England in 1980, Philip Morrris conducted a direct-mail campaign inviting teenagers to join "Club Marlboro" by sending in ten Marlboro box tops. In return for taking up cigarettes, the club's members received discounts on records and stereos, tickets to discos and sporting events, and lessons in scuba diving, wind-surfing, sailing, and hang-gliding.

The tobacco companies show even less restraint in the Third World, the biggest growth market for American cigarette sales. Per-capita cigarette consumption in Africa has risen by more than a third in the last decade. Egyptian workers now spend a fifth of their income on cigarettes. In most poor countries, smokers who can't afford to buy packs are sold cigarettes one at a time. "The sad fact," says Dr. Hayden Mahler of the World Health Organization, "is that in those countries where poverty is greatest, where the illiteracy is most widespread...more and more people are beginning to smoke each year, adding quite gratuitously to their already intolerable burden of ill health and to their enormous problems of social and economic development." Tobacco consumption in developing countries is growing four times faster than it is in industrialized ones.

The spread of smoking has been the work largely of American tobacco companies. Representatives from R.J. Reynolds encourage Third World farmers to switch from foodstuffs to tobacco by offering them free equipment, cheap loans, and a guaranteed market (despite their professed concern for American jobs, the tobacco companies imported 239,178 metric tons of inexpensive foreign leaf in 1983). Philip Morris now sells 160 different brands in 160 different countries. The companies have been aided substantially by the federal government, which helped export the smoking habit by including surplus tobacco in Food for Peace shipments. These shipments "have developed new markets for American tobacco," according to Jesse Helms, the industry's most fervid supporter in Washington. (Helms smokes an occasional Lucky Strike to keep up appearances, but he doesn't inhale.) To develop these markets further, Congress permits tobacco companies to omit health warnings from cigarette packs shipped abroad.

Third World customers are becoming increa-

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY

Journalism Award

for December 1984 is presented to

Chris Collins and John Hanchette
Gannett News Service

Collins and Hanchette examine in harrowing detail the hidden machinery behind the marketing, research and regulation of vaccines—the only products most Americans are required to take. The series shows how the different parts of the medical and pharmaceutical establishment work at cross-purposes and how, in the process, the children receiving the vaccines are given lowest priority.

and

Roger Simon
Chicago Magazine

Simon's eye-level profile of Eddie Vrdolyak explores the world of Chicago politics in all its gruffness and grit. Simon shows that while the political philosophy of "Fast Eddie" may be able to fit on the head of a pin, Vrdolyak's concern for the values of family, work, home, health, and community make his political program attractive to many Chicagoans.

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The award for articles published in February will be announced in the May issue. Nominations will close March 15. Nominations should be accompanied by two copies of the article or articles.

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singly important to U.S. tobacco companies. As the militance of American nonsmokers has increased, the industry has begun losing ground at home. "As long as tobacco's opponents worked through the traditional political channels," Taylor writes, "their activities posed the industry little threat because it knew how to handle the country's national and local political representatives. But when the new nonsmokers' rights movement appealed directly to the people over the heads of their politicians, the industry knew it was in trouble."

This change has come slowly. In 1978 the tobacco industry defeated an antismoking referendum in California by spending $6.4 million to tell the public that the new law would cost $20 million to put into effect. As it turned out, this cost estimate had three zeroes too many; the industry's mathematicians had vastly inflated their projection by calculating the square root of 4 million as 2 million instead of 2,000.

More recently, successful antismoking initiatives, like the 1983 referendum in San Francisco making it illegal to smoke in certain places, have proved that the tobacco lobby can be beaten. Similar measures have been adopted in other cities. Such victories loosen the industry's grip on legislators by reminding them that the nation's nonsmoking majority (75 percent) is willing to take its preference to the polls. When Congress last year passed a bill requiring stiffer warnings on cigarette packs, the industry put up only symbolic opposition, arguing feebly that smokers were already familiar with the opinions of the surgeon general. The industry, its confidence shaken, was afraid that if it pushed too hard it would lose leverage on issues it really cares about, like antismoking programs aimed at school children. (Nobody reads the warnings on cigarette packs.)

Which is not to say the industry has lost its taste for massive disinformation campaigns. The Tobacco Institute publishes a bimonthly screed called *The Tobacco Observor* (typical headline: "Heavy Smokers—Less Lung Cancer") and finances the Council for Tobacco Research, a pseudo-scientific body that devotes much of its energy to finding kinds of cancer that aren't caused by smoking. The Institute and R.J. Reynolds are both conducting major advertising blitzes aimed at confusing the public. In one of the Institute's ads, the chairman of the National Black Police Association is quoted as saying that laws supporting nonsmokers' rights "are a waste of law enforcement time." In the smokeless totalitarian hell imagined by the cigarette industry, policemen have to spend so much time stubbing out cigarettes in restaurants that they are unable to chase down ax murderers and child molesters.

This "controversy" about police enforcement is absurd since public-smoking laws are self-enforcing: nonsmokers are increasingly vocal and smokers are increasingly polite. If some people openly disobey such laws, suggested one of the Institute's eerily straight-faced spokesmen on "Face the Nation" not long ago, their noncompliance will contribute to a general "disrespect for the law." This concern seems a bit sudden coming from an industry that openly violates its own "principles" and then just as openly lies about its failure to live up to them.

The cigarette industry's most successful tactic, as Taylor points out, has always been "to confuse the issue by shifting the ground of the argument from cigarettes and health to civil liberties and freedom." There the government goes again, groans the Tobacco Institute. If mature, confident Americans freely choose to shorten their lives by smoking Kents in locker rooms or anywhere else, is it any of the government's business?

Perhaps not. But is it really true that smokers freely choose their addictions? Is their "decision" to ruin their health really based on "mature and informed individual freedom of choice"? More than half of all smokers either don't know or don't believe that smoking causes heart attacks; 40 percent don't know that it causes most lung cancer. Maintaining this ignorance has cost the tobacco industry hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of advertisements and public relations. The last thing it wants is a public (particularly a young public) that knows "both sides."

Ninety percent of the nation's adult smokers tried to quit last year. If nicotine addiction were entirely psychological, the tobacco industry would go broke. The industry stays in business by entrapping its customers when they're too young to know any better and then keeping them confused until they're too old to do anything about it. Despite the industry's denials, a lot of cigarette advertising is aimed at young people. Older customers just aren't as important; they may switch brands, but they seldom defect entirely. Marlboro, the most heavily advertised brand in the world, is three times as popular among children and teenagers as it is among adults. If Philip Morris really doesn't want kids to smoke, why does it use cowboys in its advertisements and plaster its logo on racing cars? ■

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TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES

Rumor has it they're sending a special task force to study the Long Island Railroad.

In 1983 the net operating loss of the Japan National Railroad was $7.5 billion—up 26 percent from the previous year. Its operating revenues were $13.75 billion, unchanged from the previous year. Its expenses, including soaring pension costs and interest payments, were up 8 percent.

'And while you're at it, honey, why don't you have them throw out that piece of wedding cake and that drumstick from last Thanksgiving.'

There are now 11 bodies frozen in the U.S. with the hopes of being thawed out and brought back to life as soon as science figures out how. That's down from a high of 40 during the 1970s. Unfortunately, the expense led some of the family members involved to reconsider, and then the bodies "had to be thawed," according to Arthur Quaife, president of Trans Time, a freezing company in Emeryville, California. In some cases, family members didn't want to continue paying "ongoing" liquid nitrogen costs for freezing.

The cleaning lady keeps throwing out the lab report.

The FDA recently asked for another extension to determine whether widely used food and drug dyes are a threat to public health, a decision it has been weighing for more than 24 years. The original deadline was set for January 12, 1963, and has been pushed back 26 times since then.

Sergeant Bilko meets Charls Walker

Personnel in the U.S. military who live off base receive a special housing allowance, which is tax free. Many of them use this allowance to make their mortgage payments, then deduct the interest portion of these payments from their taxable income.

Why comparing lawyers to vultures is insulting to vultures

Bennett J. Bergman, a senior associate with the Manhattan law firm of Glaser, Shandell and Blitz reported in the *New York Law Journal* about a recent trip he took to Bhopal, India where he observed activities around the makeshift stands that American lawyers were doing business from. "We also observed several instances," wrote Bergman, "in which U.S. attorneys were employing local Indians as go-betweens. The Indian associates would sign up the case and pass out rupees while the attorney stayed safely away from the action, usually about 20 feet from his accomplice. In one instance, after a period of observation, the Indian associate ran out of rupees and the American lawyer appeared from the car and replenished his supply. I also took special note to observe the nature of the retainers that the American attorneys were handing out. Some of them had language to the effect that the atttorney had the right to settle the case without the client's knowledge or consent and to endorse settlement drafts instead of the client. It occurred to me that many of these injured Indians may never see any portion of the recoveries."

'And get that $10 he owes me from poker.'

UPI reports that a New Jersey police chief is being investigated on suspicion that he asked a funeral director to open the grave of his deputy, William Schanck, so he could retrieve his own hat. The chief, Joseph McCarthy of Middletown, had lent his hat to the family of the deceased deputy and apparently did not get it back.

The judge must need his bridgework fixed.

After an eight-month-long undercover investigation in St. Mary's County, Maryland, one suspect, Dr. Patrick H. Pierce, a 44-year-old dentist who was described by his own lawyer as "a wild-running, sex-crazed lunatic," was convicted and sentenced to three years for narcotics sales. The sentence will be served in a work release program fixing the teeth of the poor. Meanwhile, a St. Mary's College freshman received nine years.

'I'm sorry Mr. Fitzgerald, but we haven't managed to process your application yet.'

James Gerstenzang of the Los Angeles *Times* reports that in fiscal 1983 at least 600 major defense contractors hired senior military officers who had retired from active duty within the previous three years, and during the three years ending in 1983, at least 1,900 retired high-ranking officers made the transition to defense firms.

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POLITICAL BOOKNOTES

Hidden Spending: The Politics of Federal Credit Programs. Dennis S. Ippolito. *Chapel Hill, $19.95*. Does the federal budget deficit give you nightmares? Then maybe you'd better avoid *Hidden Spending*. Ippolito, a government professor at Southern Methodist University, says that things are even worse than they seem. Largely uncounted in the growing public debt are hundreds of federal credit programs, which have accumulated nearly $600 billion in outstanding loans and loan guarantees.In recent years, he figures, credit programs have added some $100 billion to the federal debt.

The book is a brisk, thorough dissection of the federal government's role as a lender—what the programs are, how they work, how their costs are concealed, and why they've come about. It deserves attention because Washington's credit obligations have grown rapidly in the last decade and because their costs are little understood.

The costs are not simple to measure. When the federal government lends, it generally offers a lower interest rate than the borrower could get elsewhere. But calculating what he could get elsewhere involves some guesswork. And many of the loans wouldn't even be made in the private sector. Loan guarantees are even trickier, since they require no outlays unless the borrower defaults. But that doesn't mean they're free. Credit is diverted from less risky ventures to more risky ones, with the taxpayers bearing the risk instead of private lenders. Estimating costs is made harder still by the failure of lending agencies to provide complete information about defaults and interest costs.

These elusive costs are exactly what makes credit a politically attractive tool for presidents and members of Congress. In a period of growing budget pressures, loan programs offer a cheap way to channel help to a favored constituency, whether it's middle-income college students or international banks. The constituencies get their help, but without making an embarrassing addition to the deficit. Credit costs, notes Ippolito, are "sufficiently diffuse, uncertain and indirect (as well as often being long-term) to shelter political benefits against political costs. With credit, there need be no losers."

The author concedes that the Reagan administration has held the growth of credit in check and directed attention to the problem, but notes that "all of the major credit programs have survived. . .reasonably intact." What is needed is to honestly calculate the costs of loan programs and to include them in the budget—thus forcing them to compete on equal terms with those programs requiring direct expenditures.

—*Stephen Chapman*

Best of the Realist. Paul Krassner, ed. *Running Press, $8.95*. From 1958 until it faded away in 1974, Paul Krassner's underground magazine, *The Realist*, dished out an irreverent and often obscene mix of satire, interviews, and offbeat news items attacking mainstream institutions and morality. Religious piety, sexual repression, racial discrimination, and the Vietnam war were all pilloried in a manner that adolescents of all ages found hilarious and titillating, but now very little of it holds up as amusing. The book's failure, in its own way, shows just how much both the culture and former idealists have changed since the 1960s. It also demonstrates how tame most of today's satire really is.

The Realist can still shock and offend, even as it fails to amuse. The controversial, tasteless parody of "The Parts Left Out of the Kennedy Book" (William Manchester's *Death of a President*) is reprinted here, complete with its extremely unfunny necrophilia scene. Even for *Realist* fans who relished Krassner's uninhibited satire, this gratuitous shocker proved too much and the thousands of cancelled subscriptions eventually led to the magazine's collapse. Jokes and cartoons on cripples, sanitary napkins, and gay sexual injuries may in Krassner's view have advanced First Amendment rights, but they hardly offered satire with a radical point of view.

But the magazine, along with Lenny Bruce's monologues, also provided fiercely moral satire that contributed to the 1960s culture of protest and undermined the authority of respectable institutions. Even the magazine's "clean" items carried a sting. For instance, in reacting to a 1965 Evans-Novak column that said a government task force found few South Vietnamese complaints about village bombings, *The Realist* reported the results of a mock government poll. Questions included, "Do you have any complaints about the way American planes bombed your village?" The answers were similar for each question: Yes—0 percent; No—24 percent; and No Opinion—76 percent. *The Realist* quoted "Ngo Diem Gallup" as saying the high no-opinion vote was due to "physical inability to answer because of death." There's real anger in that joke, a perspective missing in today's comedians, like Eddie Murphy, who have borrowed the obscenities of Bruce and Krassner without the moral passion. Others, like Art Buchwald or Mark Russell, offer only lukewarm commentaries on politicians' foibles, and they're safe enough to allow these satirists to be treated as court jesters.

Most of *The Realist*'s targets have faded away or lost their power, and so has that sort of satiric intensity. It was fueled, at heart, by a hopeful belief that moral outrage could make a difference. But with the growth of apathy and cynical indifference, such satire has lost its appeal. For a few years in the 1970s, the political passion of *The Realist* did find its way into some of the work of Lily Tomlin, Richard Pryor and the pioneering writers for *National Lampoon* and "Saturday Night Live," but they've all lost their fire. Now we're left with Joan

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Rivers's "slut" jokes and the ascendancy of a smug, heartless conservative ethic that remains essentially unchallenged by today's toothless satirists. A modern, truly funny *Realist* would certainly be welcome now, and this dated anthology is no substitute.

—*Art Levine*

Why Democracies Perish. Jean-Francois Revel. *$17.95.* An experienced polemical columnist and celebrated point man for conservative anti-communists, Revel should know the danger of overstating his case. In particular, you would expect he would know the difference between exaggeration and threat-mongering and a sober, persuasively realistic exposition of the nature of the Soviet Union. In fact, he seems to have no sense whatever of this distinction.

It's too bad, because Revel has been watching the Kremlin for some time, and he has interesting ideas about what makes the Soviet state so particularly ruthless and potentially threatening to the rest of the world. As Revel's title indicates, his principal argument deals with the democracies' response to totalitarianism. But in fact much of the book is given over to a simple indictment of the Soviet Union—a long, detailed and often repetitive catalogue of the qualities that he believes make it so dangerous.

Much of this is familiar—the militarism, repression, adventurism, disinformation, and encouragement of terrorism. On occasion, Revel offers a new or little-known anecdote—about Soviet infiltration of the Western European peace movement, for example—to support what are by now otherwise routine charges among anti-communist conservatives. At other times, his perceptions seem more telling. Among the most persuasive is his sense of the patience and perseverence with which Moscow has often pursued its expansionist goals, trying again and again in Finland, for example, over a period of more than 25 years, before Finlandization was finally achieved in the aftermath of World War II. He is convincing too on the typical intransigence and ruthlessness of Soviet negotiators, who rarely share their Western counterparts' willingness to make concessions—both minor and major ones—to show their good will or give momentum to a difficult negotiation.

More often, however, Revel's picture of the Soviets is simply not credible—overstated, generalized and off-puttingly tendentious. His sweeping claims about Moscow's grand imperial designs, his unproved assertions about the way the Kremlin is using its "military superiority" to obtain in Western Europe "without going to war precisely the same results that a war would bring," the strangely awed and overwritten descriptions of a "monopolization of power more effective than any mankind has ever known before"—in the end, it all adds up to a shrill and fairly predictable caricature that can hardly help to alert Americans to the real difficulties of dealing with the Soviet Union.

It is not a very promising backdrop for Revel's thesis about the plight of Western democracy—his notion that it is a kind of "willing victim," losing its struggle with totalitarianism and, what's more, losing deliberately. What Revel fears most is that the West is "predisposed to succumb"—a complicity that he believes to be both witting and unwitting. In part at least it is a matter of choice and political will: "The way in which a civilization faces difficulty is at least half-determined by its mental and moral state and only half by its objective situation."

More importantly, however, and more ominous, the problem, he argues, is rooted in the very nature of democratic society. Here, too, some of Revel's arguments are more familiar than others. Our divisive politics work against consistency in foreign policy; our lack of historical memory numbs our sense of outrage, leaving us unprepared for each next round of Soviet repression and adventurism; popular opinion limits our use of force and undermines our espionage; the Atlantic alliance is unable to maintain even the semblance of unity. Many of his criticisms are indisputable. The problem here too is that he undermines his case with ludicrous exaggeration.

The democracies' political scruples may at times put us at a disadvantage in the face of an uncompromising adversary, but not even Revel himself seems to quite believe his melodramatic claim that we are somehow on the verge of "perishing." The Yalta agreement, flawed as it was, was not a "psychotic denial of reality." The cold war is hardly, as Revel argues, indistinguishable from detente, and there is little to be learned by suggesting that virtually all Western leaders—"conservative and Christian Democrat, centrists and socialists, Republicans and Democrats"—have in effect pursued the same cowardly appeasement of the Soviet Union.

Revel may himself believe that his own clever slogans can erase the differences between Henry Kissinger and Petra Kelly, but he is unlikely to convince any but the most committed and hawkish anti-Soviets. Nor can such overstated and polemical arguments possibly help us come to terms with the real differences between our diplomatic code of conduct and the very different one that tends to prevail in the Kremlin.

There is in fact something shrewd and disconcerting about many of Revel's criticisms. A good number of Western diplomats are undoubtedly misled by their optimism and openness and the store they put in good personal relations with their opposite numbers. The West does not generally like confrontations and we tend to want to get along—and as a result sometimes we may not bargain hard enough. The democracies do not, however, always show such virtuous restraint—Revel declines to pass judgment on American support for the Nicaraguan contras or the Chilean regime of General Augusto Pinochet—and in the end his overdrawn caricature of the naive and well-meaning Westerner does little to help us grapple with the very real but unavoidable ways in which our

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democratic principles may handicap our practice of realpolitik.

The problem is that Revel himself seems unsure which he believes is more important, democracy or power politics. True, here and there, he stops to nod with seeming deference toward the values that sustain democracy. On questions of human rights and domestic repression, he notes, "I am all in favor of world opinion judging the democratic countries' compromises more sternly than it does the socialist countries." Yet, he continues, somewhat disingenuously, "I merely note that this double standard gives the Soviet empire an automatic advantage." Here as elsewhere, his defense of democratic values seems perfunctory in the extreme.

He seems, for example, quite uninterested in the crucial, corrective role played by what he calls "self-criticism" and "self-condemnation." He scorns those who worry about the spiritual emptiness of capitalism and suggests that "untrammeled information is the nightmare of all governments. .even in the democracies." Certainly, by the end, it is hard not to feel that he puts the superpower rivalry first—far above the niceties of democratic principle. In his view, after all, the stakes are so high: what's at issue is nothing less than survival. He never stops to ask what such survival would mean if it can only be secured by abandoning our democratic values and going tooth for tooth with a ruthless and unprincipaled rival.

Revel doesn't in fact offer much of a solution. This isn't really surprising: it would have been hard indeed to come up with a suitable ending for his overdrawn, apocalyptic tale. Mainly, it seems, he would have us drive a harder bargain—although how exactly is not quite clear.

The book is sprinkled with vague exhortations to "exploit" the weaknesses of the Soviet system, generally through economic means. This is not a completely banal suggestion—such tactics are the subject of some argument in both the United States and Europe—but it is hardly a dramatic departure from the kinds of policies pursued to one degree or another during both detente and the cold war. More important, contrary to Revel's own frightening claims about the kinds of tactics that are required to fight the Soviets, it would not involve any serious betrayal of our democratic principles.

Some of Revel's suggestions are more provocative: during the 1950s, for example, he would have liked the West to use the threat of nuclear war to prevent the construction of the Berlin wall. He seems quite unworried about the potential dangers involved in this kind of bluster: that, after all, would be to give in to just the sort of weak-willed "passivity" that he is warning against. It is, in any case, rather difficult to see how he would press such ultimatums today.

In the end, then, once you discount the implausible suggestions, the democracies aren't left with much—only a surprisingly bland prescription for what seemed like an alarming disease. In truth, the prescription may be the most honest part of the book, Revel's way of inadvertently correcting his own exaggerated claims about the imminent demise of democracy. It's only too bad that he hasn't corrected more. He might have written a very troubling book about the difficulties of dealing with our most important rival.

—Tamar Jacoby

Democrat versus Democrat

The National Party's Campaign to Close the Wisconsin Primary

Gary Wekkin. Wekkin analyzes the controversy between the Democratic National Committee and the Wisconsin Democratic party over the format of that state's primary. Throughout, he stresses how this is not just a Wisconsin issue. He also illustrates its relevance for the survival of all national political parties and raises questions on how democracy should function in this country.

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Columbia, Missouri 65205–7088

Revival and Reaction: The Right in Contemporary America. Gillian Peele. *Oxford University Press, $24.95.* The New Right takes pride in being part of a grass roots rebellion, but Peele argues that its leadership in the last few years has been an academic and political elite (Irving Kristol, George Gilder, Paul Weyrich, Richard Viguerie). Through extremely effective organization and an emphasis on "moral issues" like school prayer and abortion, this elite managed to enlist supporters for its real agenda—conservative economic policies. The result: not one piece of the New Right's social legislation has been passed under Reagan, while several of its economic goals—especially cuts in taxes and in social programs—have.

—Kitry Krause

Passage to Peshawar. Richard Reeves. *Simon and Schuster, $15.95.* Judging from this account of the months Reeves spent in Pakistan, this fractious, impoverished Islamic nation may be the next one Americans learn about on the evening news. Since the Soviet invasion of neighboring Afghanistan, thousands of rifle-toting refugees have poured into Pakistan, and with them, billions of U.S. military aid dollars. Once friendly with the Soviet Union, Pakistan is now a "frontline" state in America's defensive strategy. All that money may not help curb Soviet aggression—Pakistan's army has started three wars and lost them all, badly. It does, however, seem helpful in propping up the regime of Pakistani General Zia ul-Haq, the Islamic fundamentalist dictator who, in a 1977 coup, murdered Zulfiqar Ali

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Bhutto, the only freely elected leader Pakistan ever had.

Reeves's writing, though a little unorganized, is full of good reporting and memorable anecdotes that reveal the history and culture behind Pakistan's political troubles: peasants strapping transistor radios to the horns of their water buffalos; police in the city of Peshawar letting the air out of the tires of parked cars to combat auto theft; Islamic holy men "excommunicating" any members of their congregations who persist in believing Americans walked on the moon. Reeves resists the easy answer of blaming the repressiveness of Islamic fundamentalism for Pakistan's authoritarian politics: it was elites in the country's swollen civil bureaucracy, for instance, who, resentful of Bhutto's challenge to their corrupt power, encouraged the army to overthrow the government. While he is well aware of the ruthlessness of the Soviets (who, he reports, have been airdropping small, doll-shaped booby-traps around Afghanistan, designed to blow up children), Reeves, an American reporter, is particularly critical of his own country's involvement in the region. Why, for instance, when literacy is one of the few genuine benefits Marxist regimes can offer Third World countries, has the U.S. specifically cut literacy programs from its $3.2 billion in aid to Pakistan? Like many others in the book it is a very good question.

—*Paul Glastris*

Direct Legislation: Voting on Ballot Propositions in the United States. David B. Magleby. *Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, $27.50.* Since 1898, more than 17,000 statewide referenda and citizen initiatives have come before American voters, and about one-third of them have made it into law. Originally conceived by Progressive-era reformers as a way to bypass corrupt state legislatures, these forms of "direct legislation" have recently achieved new prominence as a vehicle for conservative populists, like Howard Jarvis and Michigan's Richard Headlee, angry at "the liberal establishment." Last November, voters considered more than 300 measures on everything from banning pornography on cable television (Utah's Initiative A) to removing special fishing rights for Indians (Washington's Initiative 456), as well as radical tax-cutting proposals in nine states.

Magleby's valuable new book is the first comprehensive study of direct legislation as practiced today, and it comes to some disturbing conclusions. While voting on statewide propositions is touted as the undiluted expression of the people's will, Magleby writes, it tends to be uninformed, and unrepresentative of the voting public. He continues that "the people who rule the initiative and referendum process are first and foremost the people who set the agenda," and shows that these are not individual citizens, as state constitutions intended, but single-issue lobbies. And the lobbies work hand in hand with "an initiative industry" of lawyers and signature-gatherers who charge hefty fees for drafting proposed legislation and getting it on the ballot. Sixty-two percent of voters surveyed can think of no issues they would like to vote on, and direct legislation campaigns are often skewed because of the lack of spending limits (overwhelming spending by opponents, for instance, blocks measures 87 percent of the time). Poor, uneducated

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voters tend not to vote on referenda and initiatives at all and are confused when they do. Magleby claims that fully 35 percent of voters with an eighth-grade education or less cast votes inconsistent with their expressed views on the subject. Finally, despite what sponsors of a national referendum process (who range from Jack Kemp to James Abourezk) have claimed, direct legislation does not attract voters otherwise disenchanted with the political system.

Unfortunately, *Direct Legislation* is dry social science at its driest, full of formulae, regressions, "readability" and "alienation" scales, and phrases like "the dependent variable is dichotomous." It makes little attempt to examine its subject within the contexts of American history and American political thought. Still, buried in the book are such luscious tidbits as the typographical error that inadvertently made a recent Dade County, Florida referendum call for a 99.95 percent reduction in property taxes, instead of the 50 percent the sponsors wanted, and the Salt Lake City campaign theme that ran, "Confused? Many Are. Play It Safe. When In Doubt, Vote No!"

Magleby concludes that direct legislation as it currently exists is unrepresentative, heightening rather than diminishing the power of special interests. This does not mean, as Magleby seems to hint at times, that we should do away with direct legislation. But it does mean that the process is in real need of reform. If a state is going to rely on its citizens to decide the law, it must make an effort to adequately inform them about the issues.

—*David Bell*

Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans. Alan Riding. *Knopf, $18.95.* Riding, a former Mexico City bureau chief for *The New York Times*, has written a fascinating description of Mexico's economic and population problems, its authoritarian, corrupt "democracy," government-interest group symbiosis, national culture, and admiration and resentment of the United States.

The chapter on corruption is particularly useful. Riding shows how government workers, journalists, judges, and policemen all are expected to supplement their low salaries with bribes. Even the poorest peasants must pay bank officials to get credit for seeds and fertilizer, and top agency heads and presidents would be ridiculed if they did not salt away money for cars and multimillion-dollar villas. The pervasiveness of corruption suggests that land reform or welfare would fail, as benefits would go only to those rich enough to pay for them.

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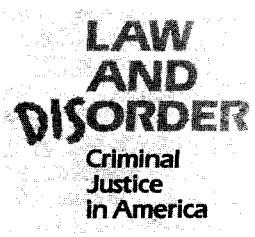

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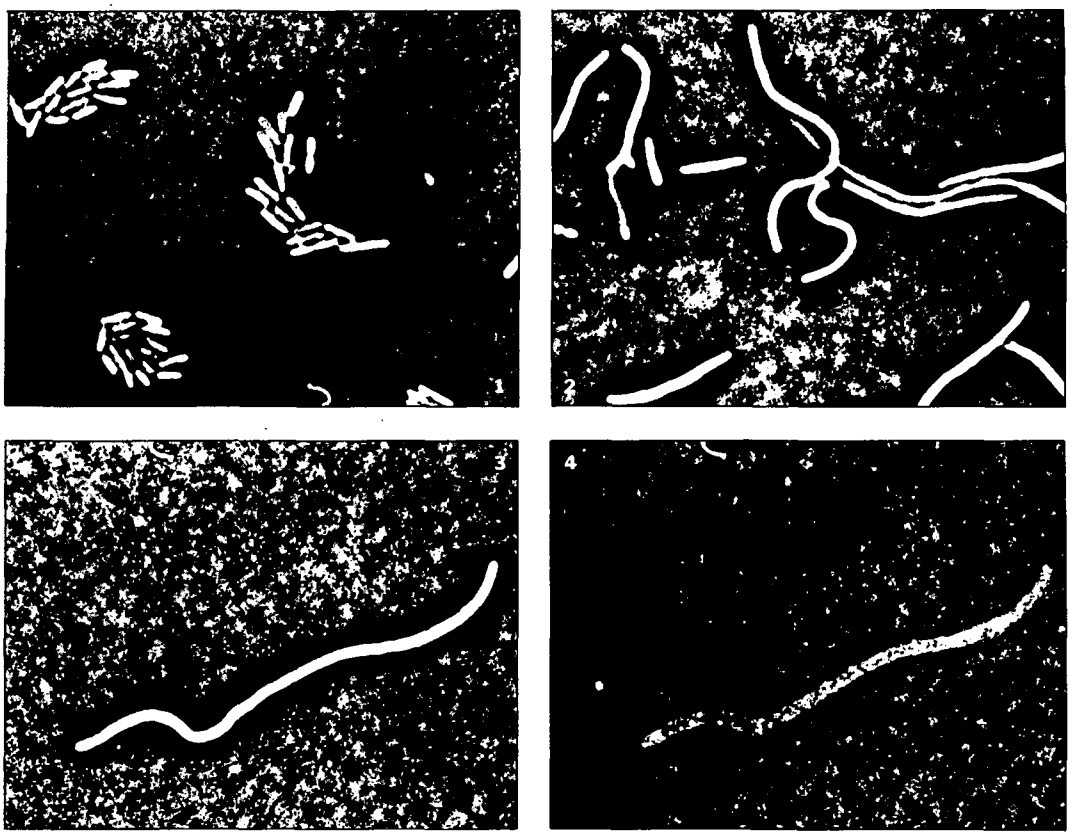

Bacteria in lab dish (1) elongate after addition of piperacillin, a new antibiotic (2); the cell wall of the microorganism weakens (3), then ruptures and dies (4).

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